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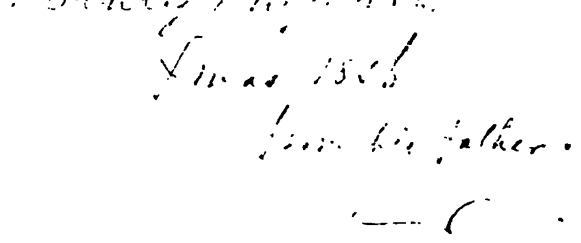

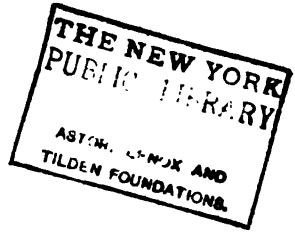
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TO THEIR MORE INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE AND TENDERER REGARD,

AND

SO TO MAKE HIS GOODNESS AND PATRIOTISM

IRRESISTIBLY INSPIRING TO THEM,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

"ANOTHER Life of Washington!"

Anticipating this very natural exclamation, let the new aspirant be allowed a few words of explanation, if not apology. Abundant and excellent are the biographies of Washington, certainly. Yet there seems room for one especially adapted to young people—not children, exactly, but the older pupils in our schools, and some learners who have done with schools.

For these, the very fulness of the best lives of Washington renders them unsuitable. Details of battles and statesmanship, the cruelties of war and politics, are not particularly interesting or instructive to the young. It seemed not undesirable to offer them some simple memoirs of our great benefactor and friend, in which the space usually occupied by public affairs should be filled with what relates more particularly to Washington himself, too generally looked upon

by the young as a cold, far-off, statue-like person, admirable rather than imitable, fit for reverence but not for love.

This idea of him has grown up very naturally; for one who attempts to write his life finds so many great things to tell of, that there is little place left for lesser traits and incidents. This very volume, begun with express intent to set forth the private and familiar, not the grand side of Washington's life and character, proved insufficient to contain at once the mere sketch of his doings and the more personal anecdotes and traditions respecting him, which last would make a volume, of themselves. All that could find space are here, but many were necessarily forced out, lest too voluminous a work should discourage youthful readers. In making selections, anecdotes less known have been preferred; and some of the personal details were taken down from the conversation of contemporaries of Washington, still able, in our day, to enjoy the homage which ever attends his name.

NEW YORK, *October*, 1856.

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MEMOIRS OF WASHINGTON.

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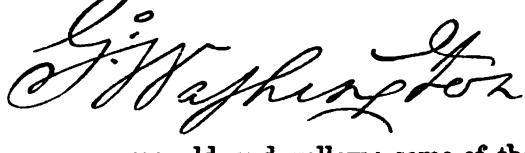
Washington's private papers—Little box in the State Department—Virginia Almanac—Care of Washington in preserving and preparing these papers—Variety of subjects treated in them—The use that has been made of them by his biographers—A more private and personal account still possible, partly by addition, partly by omission.

In the Department of State, at Washington, is a box of manuscripts—three or four cubic feet of them, perhaps—all written in the clear, flowing, manly hand of George Washington; every page, almost, and sometimes the same page more than once, bearing his beautiful signature—



The papers are old and yellow; some of them a good deal worn at the edges and in the folds; others

hardly legible, being faded copies, on thin paper, taken in a copying press. Some are autograph letters, filled and endorsed by the same hand, and tied in bundles with red tape; others are bound books, larger or smaller, according as they were intended for mere memoranda or for letters written out at length. Others are journals and registers, giving at one time, by their characteristic perseverance, for year after year, a life-like picture of the even tenor of their owner's agricultural life; and again, vivid suggestions of more public import by their sudden breaking off, as at the memorable time when he left Mount Vernon for some post of public duty, such as the first Convention, or the Presidential chair. These diaries are written on the interleavings of the old Virginia Almanac, on the title-page of which the date is announced as "in the year of our Lord God."

The memoranda commence January 1, 1768, without other preface than this:—"Where, how, and with whom my Time is spent." The Almanac professes, as usual, to contain "The Lunations, Conjunctions, Eclipses, the Sun and Moon's Rising and Setting, the Rising, Southing and Setting of the Heavenly Bodies; true Places and Aspects of the Planets; Weather, &c., calculated according to Art." Also, "Entertaining Observations for Each Month, and other Pieces of Amusement. By T. T. Philomath." On the title-page we read—

"Thus Year by Year the Reader we present
Something new matter for to give content;
You'll find here, besides the Calendar Part,
Rare Observations, written with much Art,
With Verses which to each Month do agree,
And other things of Mirth and merry glee."

There are, among the Washington papers, many of these books, perhaps forty in all; each containing, first, a calendar, and over and below the calendar on each page a verse of sententious wisdom, homely advice, or satirical observations on human nature, all couched in wretched rhyme. Secondly, ten blank pages, of which the first two or three are filled, in Washington's hand, with a journal of his own; the next two by a regular register of the weather; and then one or two by observations on farm business.

The poetry and anecdotes are such as were, doubtless, palatable at that day, though in ours they might be thought a little homely, if not coarse. Very many of the books were probably intended to be carried in the capacious pockets of their time. One almost wonders where Washington acquired so much taste and delicacy as he possessed, when we see how totally devoid of these qualities were many publications, that seem to have been accepted by society in his youth.

One considerable parcel in the box consists of diplomas and honorary testimonials from corporations; some of them parchments, with great seals and flowing ends of ribbon.

He wished to have added his own commission as Commander in Chief to the number; and after he had in due form returned it to Congress at Annapolis, he wrote to a government official, requesting that it might be sent him, saying, playfully, that it might amuse his *grand children*. But the parchment had been filed among state papers, and could not be had. It is now among the interesting relics of Washington and the Revolution, at the Patent office, at the seat of government.

Intermixed with the letters in Washington's handwriting, are a few addressed to him on various business; but in general the papers are his own, and afford the most unquestionable picture of his mind and character that we could possibly desire.

Besides the papers contained in the box, there are in the Department, arranged in presses which occupy one entire side of a large room, more than two hundred bound volumes of letters to and from Washington; a collection including some of the most interesting documents connected with our history; such as the letters of Major André, and the correspondence of the traitor Arnold. The whole includes a complete view of the state of things during the revolutionary war and the presidencies of Washington.

These papers and parchments belong to the United States. Those contained in the box were purchased of the heirs of Washington by the government, for the sum of twenty thousand dollars, and the whole pre-

cious deposite is confided to the care of the keeper of the Rolls Office, who most courteously shows them to any one who comes properly introduced.

Washington himself prepared the greater part of his papers for the public eye, observing that the history of the country during his time could not be properly written without a reference to those papers. All who have been engaged in writing our history have gladly availed themselves of these inestimable materials; and chiefly Judge Marshall and Mr. Sparks, the latter having, with infinite labor, given to his country and the world a larger portion of Washington's more important letters, with ample notes and appendixes, making eleven volumes, besides a Life of their author, in one large octavo volume. More recently, Mr. Irving has studied the manuscripts, and drawn from them and other sources the Life of Washington, now publishing in several large volumes.

Many other of the biographies of Washington have been drawn more or less from the papers in the Rolls Office, which must ever, of course, be the most reliable and the most ample source of information on the subject.

Yet, after all these researches, so minute and so voluminous are the records of his daily life which Washington thought it worth while to make, and not only to make, but to leave ready for inspection, that there remained still some personal matter, which, though not exactly fitted for the use of the historian, is yet available to the biographer, especially to one desirous above

all things to find out and exhibit traits of the man, rather than of the soldier or the statesman. Washington is far better known to his countrymen in the two last mentioned characters than in his private one. It has even been said that he "had no private character." But this opinion is contrary to all the traditions of the Washington family, who love to dwell upon the domestic traits of their august relative, and who think of him in his character of uncle, guardian, friend, and neighbor, with mingled reverence and affection.

If there could be any doubt about Washington's having intended that all his papers should be at the service of the public, motives of delicacy might be supposed to interfere with the publication of private journals and the details of family affairs; but the arrangement and preservation of the papers sufficiently show that it was the intention of the writer to lay his entire life open; to offer materials to future biographers, and to withhold nothing that might aid the world in forming a just estimate of his character.

How else account for these private papers having been left mingled with those of public interest, by a man so methodical, so cautious, and so free from all suspicion of vanity? A careful examination of the ground leads rather to the conclusion, that having been the subject of unbounded calumny, Washington thought the best and most complete answer to these sinister imputations, would be to show without reserve what manner of man he had been, from the beginning, and

throughout his whole career, as well behind the scenes as upon the great stage; in his home business as well as in affairs of world-wide moment; in his amusements as well as in the most serious occupations that ever were laid upon mortal man. Here we find him as he was; neither hiding his anger nor parading his charity; full of interest in his own affairs, yet with an ear and hand never inaccessible to the unfortunate; telling as coolly what money he lost and won at cards, as on what occasions he went to church; recording in one line the arrival of splendid guests, and the illness of an old negro woman; reproving an overseer; lecturing a spendthrift; trying to manage the affairs of a troublesome lady; recounting the performance of the dogs and the fortunes of each day's hunt; ordering handsome things for the house and table; giving all the particulars of a day's ploughing or hoeing; making out long lists of Mrs. Washington's and Miss Custis's finery, to be ordered from London, or describing that household implement, a mangle;—in short, chronicling every day's doings, without fear or reserve, as one who should say—Here I am; make what you can of me!

Purposely to conceal all this truth, and nature, and variety, for fear that the exhibition of the private side of Washington should lessen the reverence we have all been accustomed to feel for the public one, would be truly the most irreverent thing we could be guilty of. It is substituting for true, heartfelt honor, a kind of superstitious image-worship; parading a statue in-

stead of the man, in order that art may ingeniously cover up the deficiencies of nature. Washington needs very little of this kind of consideration.

The desire to know every trifling particular that can be ascertained about those we admire, is so natural that there must be some respectability about it. A feeling nothing less than universal cannot be considered morbid or unbecoming. Let it be conceded that History must give only the dignified aspect of a public man; biography, especially when intended for the young, may venture a little lower. When we would hold up to young people an example, in which we desire to interest them, we must, if possible, bring that example within their reach, in order to inspire them with hope of imitation. The image of Washington presiding over armies and senates, however magnificent it may be, can only affect us like a picture in the distance. We see the grand outline and admire the effect, but we can accord only vague and general admiration. Few expect to be eminent in the cabinet or in the field; and it is natural to look lower for the characteristics on which our lives are to be modelled.

Happily for us, Washington, the man, is not wholly inaccessible to us, and more happily still, the qualities of the man are by his life found to be entirely compatible with those of the hero,—one of the most valuable of facts. He himself said truly, in an address to his officers on retiring from the army, "The private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry will not be

less amiable in civil life than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field." Such was his modest, abiding sentiment, and happy was it for the great and successful soldier that he could afford to utter it. Happy is it for us that he was enabled to show it in his own case.

I would by no means be understood as promising great things in the way of novelty. No startling facts hitherto concealed; no newly discovered virtues or weaknesses, no qualities as yet unsuspected, have rewarded my faithful study of the Washington manuscripts. All I propose is as familiar and home-like a life of the great man, as can be gathered from his own papers and the sayings of his contemporaries, many of whom wrote about him; and in order to make the story as interesting as I can to young people, I omit much that is usually interwoven with the Life of Washington, such as details of battles and of politics; supplying the place of such particulars by extracts from the diary of daily life at Mount Vernon, and descriptions of Washington's doings, appearance, habits, and manners, as reported by himself and his contemporaries. The world has long been in possession of the facts; in this book there is some attempt to present them in a homely and familiar way, without any departure from the profound respect which should fill every American heart when contemplating the character of Washington.

The notes which Mr. Sparks collected with infinite pains and labor, afford a world of interesting matter,

of a more private and personal kind than that which he embodies in the text. To these I am particularly indebted, though I have sought in many other directions for information suited to my purpose.

CHAPTER II.

English ancestors of Washington—Letter of Sir Henry—Family annals—Curious tradition in England—Intermarriages in Virginia—Washington's birth-place—Old house suffered to go to ruin—Plain and simple manners of the day in Virginia—Advantages of these to Washington—Associations with the Potomac and its shores.

The English ancestors of Washington were of great respectability, and noted for a spirit of independence and patriotism. The name appears in English annals as early as the twelfth century. The family appellation was originally Hertburn, but William de Hertburn, about the middle of the thirteenth century, assumed the name of his property, the manor of Wessyngton, which, in course of time, came, by means of the ordinary changes, to be written Washington. One of the family, Sir Henry Washington, is celebrated as having held the city of Worcester against Fairfax and the Parliamentary army, in Cromwell's time. The letter he wrote on the occasion is so like what our Washington might have written in similar circumstances, that we must take the liberty of copying it from Irving's Life, Vol. I. page 14.

"SIR,—It is acknowledged by your books and by report of your own quarter, that the king is in some of your armies. That granted, it may be easy for you to procure his Majesty's commands for the disposal of this garrison. Till then I shall make good the trust reposed in me. As for conditions, if it shall be necessitated, I shall make the best I can. The worst I know and fear not; if I had, the profession of a soldier had not been begun, nor so long continued, by

"Your Excellency's humble servant,

"HENRY WASHINGTON."

Another of the family, Joseph Washington, an emi nent lawyer in London, in 1692, translated from the Latin one of Milton's political works, which shows him to have been an advocate of freedom and the rights of the people. We find, by all accounts, Washington's ancestry to have been in general patriotic and manly.

In 1539 the manor of Sulgrave, near Northampton, commonly called Washington's manor, a piece of confiscated property formerly belonging to the monastery of St. Andrews, was granted to Lawrence Washington, to whose memory and that of his wife is found, in the church there, a monument with an inscription, and effigies in brass of four sons and seven daughters. The eldest of these sons had a still more numerous family, having been endowed with sixteen children, and his eldest son after him had fourteen—seven sons and seven daughters. The second and fourth of these sons,

who very naturally thought it prudent to look for a future some where else than on the patrimony, were the John and Lawrence who emigrated to Virginia about 1657.

In the pretty little English village of Cookham, in Berkshire, not very far from the royal precincts of Windsor Castle, many tombs of the Washington family are extant, and the inhabitants of that place insist not only that Mr. Augustin Washington married his second wife, Mary Ball, there, but even that George Washington himself was born there in a house still pointed out. But when tradition goes so far as to show a tree that he planted, we are obliged to demur a little, and find it difficult to extend our faith beyond the probability, or something like it, that Mary Ball may have been a native of Cookham.*

We cannot help feeling some interest in every trifling particular relating to the Washington family, though General Washington himself cared but little about his pedigree. Men of his stamp do not think of borrowing honor. When he had become famous, Sir Isaac Heard, of the Herald's office in London, took pains to trace back the ancestry of the new wonder, and wrote to him for such particulars as might be in his possession. In the answer, Washington says:— "This is a subject to which I confess I have paid but very little attention. My time has been so much occupied in the busy and active scenes of life from an early

* See Appendix. No. 1.

period of it, that but a small portion could have been devoted to researches of this nature, even if my inclination or particular circumstances should have prompted to the inquiry."

When family affection and kind offices were in question, he seems to have been active in tracing relationships. His last will shows that he remembered the remotest; and we know that when he was making that will, he caused inquiries to be made, both in England and the United States, for unknown relatives to whom he might leave memorials; but we can discover no research prompted by pride or ambition. He had neither time nor inclination to turn aside to visit the tomb of any Jupiter Ammon of the Old World. We should have been surprised to find him opening a correspondence with the Herald's office, or even entering with alacrity upon researches suggested there.

Augustin Washington was twice married; first to Jane Butler, who left him two sons, and secondly to Mary Ball, characterized on her tomb and known to history as "Mary, the mother of Washington," a sufficient distinction. Little is known of the father of George Washington, except that he was a handsome, stout, strong man, prosperous and happy, and much respected by his neighbors, and that he died at the age of forty-nine. We have reason to believe he was a man of sense and virtue. It is pleasant to think so, and to find tradition confirming the impression. Tradition loves the marvellous, and might easily have

made out George Washington to have been the miraculous product of bad antecedents, like Eugene Sue's heroes and heroines, whose virtues are the growth of the very circumstances which are sometimes represented as the excuse for every degree of criminality.

Washington's great great grandfather, John Washington, came over from England with his brother, in 1657, and settled in Westmoreland county, Virginia, where both bought lands on the Northern Neck, a tract lying between the Potomac and the Rappahannock rivers. John took up his residence at Bridge's Creek, married Ann Pope, and became a prosperous planter. He commanded the troops raised by Virginia and Maryland to repel the intrusions of certain Indian tribes, and was a good and spirited citizen; honored by his contemporaries, as we judge by their naming the parish after him, a record which endures to this day.

Smyth, a very angry tory, who suffered for his loyalty during the revolution, says:—"General Washington is descended from a family of good repute, in the middle rank of life, now residing in the settlement of Chotank; every individual planter in this numerous settlement being actually related to him by blood."

The family continued to reside at Bridge's Creek for nearly eighty years. There was born Augustin Washington, grandson of the original settler, and to him on the 22d of February, (N. S.) of the year 1732, that great son, destined by nature and Providence—by

character and by fortune—to render the family name immortal.

George Washington was born in the parish of Washington, in a lonely and plain farm-house, near the Potomac, that happy river, beloved by him to the last day of his life, and whose every wave is glorified by indelible association with his memory. No portents marked the day, which was probably as cold as Greenland, for February has its sharp bite, even in Virginia. Washington himself says in his Diary, of another February day there, (Feb. 20th, 1772,) "Attempted to ride to the mill, but the snow was so deep and crusty, even in the track that had been made, that I chose to tie my horse half way and walk there."

There is a whole picture of his birth morning in that little sentence. A wide expanse of deep snow, with perhaps a single track through it; the general blank broken only by here and there a clump or fringe of evergreens, which some wit has said ought to be called "never-greens," so gloomy is their color compared with that of summer foliage. A calm quiet reigning over the face of Nature; the cattle shivering under the sheds, and fowls huddled in every sheltered corner; not even the sound of an occasional wheel on the snow-covered road, to give a hint of the going on of ordinary life in the bitter atmosphere.

There, in that old farm-house, which was so old-fashioned and dilapidated, after the occupation of so many generations of Washingtons, that the family did

not think it worth preserving many years longer; a "four-roomed house with a chimney at each end," which chimney was carried up on the outside,—at ten o'clock in the morning, was born a little boy, fair-haired and long-limbed, but so much like other little boys that it is hardly probable even the most sagacious of the neighbors thought him likely to become one of the great powers of the earth. There were boys in the house before he came, too, for he was the child of a second marriage, and had not even the advantage—and it was an advantage in those days—of being the eldest son. The event, doubtless, seemed a very common-place one, unless perhaps to those elder brothers, who, being quite young, were probably delighted with the "new baby," though they little suspected he was to found a new empire.

It is good to think what *may* be the future offices and destiny of the seemingly insignificant about us. It would teach us more respect for each other.

> Alas! we think not what we daily see
> About our hearths;—angels that are to be!

The family lived very plainly, and the new-comer opened his dark blue eyes on a scene no grander than may be found in the plainest Virginia or Vermont farm-house of our own day. There was, we may be sure, a low ceiling; a great, wide, brick or tile fire-place; a well saved carpet, with a few straw-bottomed chairs, and a tall old bedstead with posts like sloop

masts,—such a one as Washington slept in to the end of his life. Perhaps these posts supported white dimity curtains, for bed curtains had not then been voted unhealthy; and very likely there were some curious, old, black-framed engravings, of favorite heroes or preachers, hanging high up on the walls; and almost surely

A varnished clock that ticked behind the door.

We could fancy, from the punctuality of Washington's life habits, that the ticking of a clock must have been one of the earliest sounds that caught his ear.

He was baptized April 5th, Mrs. Mildred Gregory being his godmother, and Mr. Beverley Whiting and Captain Christopher Brooks, godfathers. His early home was probably almost as rough and simple as Shakspeare's. The farm-houses at the south are plain enough, even now, and there are some still extant which retain a good many of the old frugal features of Washington's early day. The chimneys of such are very generally built on the outside, and it is not uncommon to see a brick oven in the open air, a little removed from the dwelling for fear of fire. About these primitive homesteads are to be found Marigolds, Princes' Feathers, and Hollyhocks; fences lined with currant-bushes, and door-yards ornamented with sweet-brier, but no Dahlias or Camellias, or rolled gravel walks or privet hedges. Utility dominates over all; beauty comes, if at all, mostly by chance. Generally

an old black-looking paling keeps out the less enterprising of the pigs, but over it and under it fowls innumerable find their way, whenever grain is scarce about the barn. Yet there is an air of ease and freedom, and one feels always sure of hospitality, the cardinal virtue of the South. The house is the scene of quiet and serious business; nature out of doors seems to be at play, and leisure and amusement are associated, in the minds of the inhabitants, very much with the sunshine and the open sky. In fine weather, some of the homely household occupations which pride and taste love to keep behind the scenes, are carried on under the eaves of the farm-house, but this is only that good mother Earth may take care of what must within doors be cleared up with promptness and toil, neither of which our Southern brethren are very fond of. The dark-complexioned people, who are a never-failing feature of the Virginia home landscape, love the sunshine, even in July, and they never stay under a roof when they can help it. This occasions those shrill, long-drawn cries and objurgations, which one is apt to hear in passing such an old-fashioned dwelling as we are speaking of. Bells being not thought of, and travellers not frequent, family affairs are largely expedited by feminine screamings, which help to enliven the general solitariness.

It was one of the preparatory blessings of George Washington's happy lot, that he was bred in this plain and simple way. It made him easy to please, fond of

wholesome and innocent pleasures, and satisfied with plain things for his own use, all his days, although he had taste, and knew how to conform to fashion in matters which concerned other people. He was always most emphatically a rural man. He was most at home in a farmer's plain clothes, roving the woods with his gun, watching the performance of the plough and the harrow, or exercising his skill as a surveyor, on his own or the neighboring fields.

This taste we cannot but consider a great advantage to him who was to bear the brunt of great affairs, to deal with multitudes of differing and uncongenial minds, and to unravel many a web of tortuous diplomacy. A true love of the country is an element of mental repose and balance; habits of rural occupation, though they may make the tumults of public life distasteful, bestow, in some measure, the calmness which is required for the highest and purest consideration of great affairs; and though we dare not aver that a man may

> Hold fire in his hand
> By thinking of the frosty Caucasus,

yet we may be allowed to believe that the very remembrance of forest walks and bracing winter rides, of hunting and planting, of hearty hospitality and neighborly freedom, is capable of refreshing and cooling the perplexed mind, temporarily engaged in far different scenes, and looking for a return to peace and retirement as the sweetest of recreations.

Let us not then be deemed fanciful if we say—Blessings on that homely old farm-house, which began and cherished in our Washington a love of quiet, pure, and simple pleasures; in which was laid the foundation of his industry, his frugality, and his activity!

Nothing now remains to mark its site but a broad slab of free-stone, placed there for the purpose by Mr. Custis. The landscape around has little natural interest and few evidences of cultivation. Pines, Hemlocks, and wild figs are scattered here and there; the fences are poor and neglected; all shows plainly the effect of *laisser aller* habits in the people. One almost fancies that the energy and determination which might have served the entire region for several generations, were concentrated and absorbed by George Washington, model as he was of promptness and thoroughness in all things, from the greatest to the least.

But what a charm hovers over the spot! What other on earth makes an American's heart thrill like this! A vine-leaf—a sprig of cedar—a pebble, from that holy ground, is a talisman of memory. The poet's words, so true to nature and experience, come up, unbidden, as we pace those silent fields and woods. We do not wrest them from their highest meaning when we apply them to the place consecrated by the thought of Washington:

> Call it not vain! They do not err
> Who say that when the *Hero* dies
> Mute Nature mourns her worshipper
> And celebrates his obsequies;

Who say that hill and forest lone
For the departed chief make moan;
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh
And oaks in deeper groan reply;
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirges round his grave."*

* A very prosaic observer, Smyth, in his "Tour in the U. S. of America,"—says of the country and the hero:

"The Potomac is certainly the most noble, excellent, and beautiful river I ever saw; indeed it can be excelled by no other river in the universe. Its entrance into the Chesapeake is near a hundred miles from the Atlantic. It is navigable for the largest ships as far as Alexandria and even to George Town, which is close to the Falls and eight miles above Alexandria.

"The situation, and gentlemen's seats on the road are beyond comparison and description beautiful.

* * * * * * * *

"After we had passed this noble river, we entered one of the most agreeable as well as respectable settlements in Virginia. In this place Mr. George Washington was born, who has become somewhat distinguished for being at the head of an inactive, timid army, which never performed a gallant exploit, yet have succeeded in their pursuits far beyond even their most sanguine expectations or hopes."

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Augustin Washington—Merits of Mr. Weems's little book—Family legends reported by him—Lesson in generosity—Another in natural religion—Country life and the love of it.

WHATEVER is preserved with regard to Mr. Augustin Washington, is creditable to him. As good authority as we have for the story of the new hatchet and the ruined cherry-tree, which is always quoted as showing the little George's love of truth, and the courage with which he could avow it, gives us one or two anecdotes not quite so threadbare, which imply that the father was not one of those parents who leave to chance the prompting of good thoughts in the minds of their children. Here is an instance which Mr. Weems professes to have had directly from an old lady, who, in her youth, had spent much time in the Washington family, of which she was a distant relative.*

* Mr. Weems, at one time clergyman of Washington's parish, wrote a very entertaining little book about the hero, so full of enthusiasm and eulogy, with not a few blunders, that some of the graver historians have

"On a fine morning of the fall of 1737, Mr. Washington, having little George by the hand, came to the door, and asked my cousin Washington and myself to walk with him to the orchard, promising he would show us a fine sight. On arriving at the orchard, we were presented with a fine sight, indeed. The whole earth, as far as we could see, was strewed with fruit, and yet the trees were bending under the weight of apples, which hung in clusters like grapes. * * *

"Now, George," said his father, "look here, my son! Don't you remember when this good cousin of yours brought you that fine large apple last spring, how hardly I could prevail on you to divide with your brothers and sisters; though I promised you if you would but do it God Almighty would give you plenty of apples this fall." Poor George couldn't say a word; but hanging down his head, looked quite confused, while, with his little naked toes, he scratched in the soft ground.

treated it with disregard, and as if it were a mere fable. Yet the book was published very soon after Washington's death, and by one who had been bred and settled in the very region where all facts and traditions about its subject must have been best known and easiest ascertained, and although his facts are often questionable, his style somewhat turgid, and his eulogy carried too far, it can hardly be that the various anecdotes given by him were not current at the time. Certain inaccuracies in point of dates and names do not, entirely, invalidate the testimony of Mr. Weems as to Washington's character and the estimation in which he was held; and the traditional stories which are scattered here and there through the little book have too much grace and sweetness in them to be cast aside as worthless. Mr. Weems's Saxon English, though defaced occasionally by some vulgarism or provincialism, might well be a model for our more ambitious day.

"Now look up, my son! look up, George!" continued his father, "and see there how richly the blessed God has made good my promise to you. Wherever you turn your eyes you see the trees loaded with fine fruit, many of them, indeed, breaking down; while the ground is covered with mellow apples, more than you could eat in your whole life, my son."

"George looked in silence on the wide wilderness of fruit. He marked the busy humming bees, and heard the gay notes of birds; then, lifting his eyes, filled with shining moisture, to his father, he softly said—

"'Well, Pa! only forgive me this time, and see if I ever be so stingy any more.'"

This story certainly deserves to be true, for it is beautiful; and the poetic style of the narrator, while it warns us not to take too literally the particulars of the little anecdote, certainly gives a value of its own to what may very well have been a real family story, such as are current in almost every house where intelligent parents and children live together in kind and genial intercourse. The life-long, passionate love of Washington for rural and domestic pleasures, would justify us in giving faith to almost any stories of the freedom and sweetness of his early home days. From the beginning he must have been a happy boy. All his earlier papers show it. You cannot read his schoolboy writings, without feeling as if you were looking into a clear, cheerful, frank face. Let us give his father part

of the credit of it, since a home-bred boy learns to imitate his father, and to think and be like him long before eleven years of age.

Take another of Mr. Weems's stories, told with the richness of Jean Paul or a fine Flemish painter.

"One day Mr. Washington went into the garden, and prepared a little bed of finely pulverized earth, on which he wrote George's name in full, in large letters; then, strewing in plenty of cabbage seed, he covered it up and smoothed all over nicely with the roller. This bed he purposely prepared close alongside of a gooseberry walk, which happening at the time to be hung with ripe fruit, he knew would be honored with George's visits pretty regularly every day.

Not many mornings had passed away before in came George, with eyes wild rolling, and his little cheeks ready to burst, with great news.

"O, Pa! come here—come here!"

"What's the matter, my son, what's the matter?"

"O come here, I tell you, Pa; come here, and I'll show you such a sight as you never saw in all your lifetime."

The old gentleman, suspecting what George would be at, gave him his hand, which he seized with great eagerness, and tugging him along through the garden, led him point-blank to the bed whereon was inscribed, in large letters, and in all the freshness of new spring plants, the full name of

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

"There, Pa!" said George, quite in an ecstasy of astonishment; "did you ever see such a sight in all your life-time?"

"Why, it seems like a curious affair, sure enough, George!"

"But, Pa, who did make it there? who did make it there?"

"It grew there by chance, I suppose, my son."

"By chance, Papa! O no, no, it never did grow there by chance, Pa! Indeed, that it never did!"

"High! why not, my son?"

"Why, Pa, did you ever see any body's name in a plant bed, before?"

"Well, but, George, such a thing might happen, though you never saw it before."

"Yes, Pa; but I did never see the little plants grow up so as to make one single letter of my name before. Now how could they grow up so as to make *all* the letters of my name? And then, standing one after another, to spell my name so *exactly*—and all so neat and even, too, at top and bottom? O, Pa, you must not say that chance did all this. Indeed, somebody did it, and I dare say, now, Pa, you did it, just to scare me, because I am your little boy."

His father smiled, and said, "Well, George, you have guessed right. I indeed did it, but not to scare you, my son; but to learn you a great thing which I wish you to understand. * * * * As my son could not believe that chance had made and

put together so exactly the letters of his name, (though only sixteen,) then how can he believe that chance has made and put together all those millions and millions of things that are now so exactly fitted to his good? That my son may look at every thing around him, see what fine eyes he has got! and a little pug nose to smell the sweet flowers, and pretty ears to hear sweet sounds, and a lovely mouth for his bread and butter, and O, the little ivory teeth to cut it for him, and the dear little tongue to prattle for his father! and precious little hands and fingers to hold his play-things, and beautiful little feet for him to run about upon.

"And when my little rogue of a son is tired of running about, then the still night comes for him to lie down, and his mother sings and the little crickets chirp him to sleep; and as soon as he has slept enough, and jumps up fresh and strong as a little buck, there the sweet, golden light is ready for him. When he looks down into the water, there he sees the beautiful silver fishes for him, and, up in the trees, there are the apples and peaches, and thousands of sweet fruits for him; and all, all around him, wherever my dear boy looks, he sees every thing just to his wants and wishes; the bubbling springs with cool, sweet water for him to drink; and the wood to make him sparkling fires when he is cold, and beautiful horses for him to ride, and strong oxen to work for him, and the good cow to give him milk, and bees to make sweet honey for his sweeter mouth, and the little lambs, with snowy wool, to make beautiful clothes for him!

"Now all these, and all the ten thousand other good things, more than my son can ever think of, and all so exactly fitted to his use and delight—now could chance ever have done all this for my little son?"

We need not carry our extract further, since George's full assent to the conclusion his father wished him to draw from this beautiful rural picture, may easily be taken for granted.

Without pretending that the poetic outburst should be credited to the father, or the precocious decision to the son, we must thank Mr. Weems, in the name of children yet to be, for so sweet and suggestive an enunciation of the common and unnoted things that prove God's goodness, while we accept the nucleus of the story as a family legend. That a lesson to a bright little boy of five years old should be given in such a form, is not so unlikely in the country as it would be in town. Intelligent people who live in the country are generally very fond of it, and their imaginations are quickened and their thoughts elevated, by familiarity with rural objects. To live much in the open air; to notice the clouds, and speculate with interest upon the weather; to depend directly for comfort and plenty upon the success of what is planted in the ground; to go into the tall, lonely, whispering woods for fuel instead of applying to the merchant for it—even the pleasant experience of the wood's noisy, genial blaze on the hearth, instead of the warmth of the forgotten coal fire- -these, and many other particulars of rural life, make country

people (other things being equal) more poetical than citizens; and it is not uncommon to hear them use expressions that would sound affected, if uttered among brick walls and in a thick, smoky, business atmosphere.

What is called love of the country arises partly from this, *i. e.* the suggestion of poetical ideas, although those who live in the country are not always those who analyze the feeling. It is an elevated one, sometimes soiled by sordid accompaniments or desperate needs. If it were not for these ill accidents, there could hardly be any cities, so natural is it for man to love a position which exalts his imagination, and brings him more directly face to face with Nature.

It cannot but be interesting to trace the progress of this little, simple boy, bred in the very plainest country style, to the eminence he attained before he passed middle life—an eminence from which he could look down on the greatest sovereigns of the earth, since his elevation was the result of merit and not of accident.*

* One of Mr. Weems's stories, too vivid and picturesque to be omitted, yet too evidently fabulous to deserve admission into the text, is given in Appendix No. 2, for the amusement of our young readers.

CHAPTER IV.

The mother of Washington—Her characteristics and those of her children—Her early estimates of her eldest son—What he was in youth—His only sister's resemblance to him—Mrs. W.'s only weakness—Simplicity of her manners—"Little George"—Obligations of great men to their mothers—Almost forgotten—Duty and virtue of Obedience.

It is often repeated that Mrs. Mary Washington, who was twenty-eight years old when her eldest son was born, was a beauty in her youth, and the picture of Mary Ball, now in England, justifies the claim. "The strong are born of the strong, and the good of the good," says Kepler. Her children were all tall, and their descendants still maintain the family reputation for fine, robust figures, although some of them have, like the General, a tendency to diseases of the throat and chest. George is said to have been the favorite of his mother, but we may be allowed to hope that a woman, noted for good sense and high principle, would hardly have a favorite among her children. He was her eldest, and a fine, handsome boy, endowed with

qualities of mind and heart which his mother certainly could not be ignorant of, however an ordinary observer may have overlooked them. The holy book says, *But his mother kept all these sayings in her heart;* and so it is in common life. The wise mother has a prophetic eye for the character of her son, though she cannot foresee his fortunes; for the affairs of this world are so much ajar, that character and destiny have only a very general connection. Probably she found George more amenable to the sense of duty than other boys of his age. This might make him seem a favorite, because his mother would naturally trust him more and find less in him to reprove. There is very little reason to believe that he was what is called a brilliant boy, such as weak mothers are apt to be proud of.

He was certainly a symmetrical being, having a face full of expression and seriousness, a clear blue eye, a winning smile, and a tall and rather slender figure. The effect of his smile in lighting up his face, was often noted in after years. His only sister, Mrs. Lewis, can hardly have been as handsome, for a woman; at least not as well proportioned; for we are told that, in after days, when he was Commander-in-chief, she was so like her brother, that with his military hat and cloak on, she might have obtained the usual salute from the sentinels in his stead.

There was in Washington's face, as noted by several of his contemporaries and shown in his portraits, at least when he reached middle life, an expression of

modesty, and even of tenderness, which might well become the countenance of a woman; but his figure was square shouldered, and made more for strength and endurance than for grace of movement. These characteristics were those both of father and mother, if we may judge from various tokens.

Mr. Paulding, who had his information direct from some of the Washington family, since deceased, says that Mrs. Washington exacted great deference from her sons, and that "the only weakness in her character was an excessive fear of thunder, which originated in the melancholy death of a young female friend, who was struck dead at her side by lightning, when Mrs. Washington was about fifteen years old." *

There is, at this day, an old lady at Fredericksburgh who remembers her mother saying that Mrs. Washington often came there to drink tea, riding in what is called in Virginia a "stick chair,"— i. e. an old-fashioned, unstuffed chaise, without a top—"bringing little George on a stool at her feet." This little characteristic touch from an authentic source is worth mentioning, merely because it shows the extreme simplicity in which Washington was brought up.

* Mr. Paulding says further that "As a native of Virginia, she was hospitable by birthright, and always received her visitors with a smiling welcome. But they were never asked to stay but once, and she always speeded the parting guest by affording every facility in her power. She possessed all those domestic habits and qualities that confer value on women, and had no desire to be distinguished by any titles but those of a good wife and mother."

It is hardly necessary to insist on what has been so long reckoned among points established—that great men are, one and all, in a peculiar manner, indebted to their mothers. Many of them have been so well aware of this, that they have expressly recorded their sense of obligation, and Washington is said to have expressed his, though no direct record of the feeling is found in his writings. He was certainly no exception to the general rule. We know but little of his mother, but that little is significant, and quite enough to assure us that we see in his character much that was evidently the reflection of hers. Besides the qualities that he inherited from her, there were some results of her notions of family government, peculiarly adapted to the education of one born to command. We know, by abundance of unmistakable signs, that obedience was the first lesson that Mrs. Mary Washington taught her children; a lesson unfashionable in our day, but without which we should never have had the Washington whose least word commanded the respect and observance of those about him, and secured the performance of the most difficult and dangerous services, often essential to the great cause. It is only by obeying that we learn to command.

It has often been observed, that no duty is so neglected in our country as the enforcement of obedience, particularly filial obedience. The reason popularly given for this acknowledged fact is, that our institutions, in sweeping away hereditary distinctions, disallowing

caste, and giving to every man a voice in the state, have weakened the sentiment of reverence in general, and consequently lowered the national idea of obedience, even to parents.* If this be the true reason, it is surely a very bad one. If the younger members of our republic have been led by circumstances into so serious an error, it certainly becomes the parental portion, who often enough lament the result, to teach them this truth—that republican freedom supposes private self-government, and that this can begin in nothing but a spirit of obedience, obedience to parents first, and afterwards to the sense of duty, to the laws of the land, and to the great Fountain of all law.

Without too curiously speculating as to the cause of what is, nevertheless, an acknowledged evil, let us say, of the evil itself, that if there be any value in the concurrent testimony of all past time, any authority in the teachings of Christ and his apostles, any warning in sad experience, obedience must underlie all the virtues that go to make up the character of a good son, a good soldier, a good citizen. There is no substitute for it, none. Obedience is, in a child, nothing but the habit-

* Mr. Jefferson, in a letter to Dr. Cooper, of Columbia College, 1822, says:—"The article of discipline is the most difficult in American education. Premature ideas of independence, too little repressed by parents, beget a spirit of insubordination, which is the great obstacle to science, with us, and a principal cause of its decay since the Revolution. I look to it with dismay, as a breaker ahead, which I am far from being confident we shall be able to weather." This prognostic has been fully vindicated by experience, as many of our Colleges can sadly testify.

nal submission of the will to the law of right, since the parent stands, at that period of life, in the place of God. This habit is the foundation of all virtue. It was obviously that of Washington's virtue, and the source of his great deeds; for he spent his life in doing just what he did not want to do, in obedience to that sense of right which was habitual to him. As we know more of his mother than of his father, we ascribe this peculiar feature of his character more particularly to her, although we have reason to suppose his father to have been also a judicious person.

From the earliest record we possess of the career of Washington, we find the sense of duty always connected in his mind with the hope of success; the idea of co-operation with Divine law with the dependence on Divine aid. He evidently felt that obedience is strength. Nothing less than this could have supported him, under the public reproaches and private sneers that goaded him incessantly, during the earlier part of the war, when a single yielding up of duty to the selfish desire of personal reputation, might have covered him with glory and ruined our cause.

This point—the dignity and ennobling uses of obedience, and the danger of its being almost forgotten in our American scheme of education—was too important to be passed lightly over, in an attempt to trace the early training of Washington, and to discover what were some of the accessories in the formation of a character so weighty and so benignant. Our readers

must excuse this instance of prolixity. It seemed desirable to connect the consideration of an unpopular virtue with the character of one, confessedly the first of men, in whom it was so strikingly operative. Acknowledging at the outset that we look upon Washington as the ideal American man—not the slow and dogged Saxon, or the mercurial and chivalric Norman, but a product of both, and different from both—it follows that in making him a pattern, the American rises toward a high point of virtue; in departing from such a model he sinks to a lower grade. When we have seen an American of nobler and more admirable character—for we shall never propose a foreign model to a nation that has no prototype—we may, without loss, set aside this one, vouchsafed us by Almighty Providence as a birth-gift to our young republic, at once a pattern for its character and a promise of its fortune. The self-control, the economy, the courage, the enterprise, the public spirit, the religiousness, which distinguished Washington, are the component points of the true American character, which has little ancestral *prestige* or inspiration to rely on, which has no "privilege" to shield corruption, no "caste" to dignify vice. Our wealth is suddenly acquired, bringing of course great necessity for self-control; it is continually changing hands, making economical habits peculiarly necessary. Our vast resources originating vast designs, enterprise becomes a splendid quality; the facility occasioned by a division of responsibility, is too often the source of

official corruption; true public spirit—the vital spark of national self-government—is the most difficult of virtues. Self-assertion and worldliness being our ever-present snare, amid such unexampled opportunities of material prosperity, religion is our best safeguard and highest wisdom—the only citadel of our liberties, the only voucher for their perpetuity. When we remember these things, let us remember also, that Washington was the model in all of them; and, wisely looking back to first causes in so important a matter, let us not disdain to lay foundations of character, upon which it shall at least be possible for so high and noble a structure to stand.

God pardon us for ever holding lightly so great a blessing as this model; for praising Washington in words, while we set aside his example, as not suited to what, we persuade ourselves, is an advance in the spirit of the age.

Circumstances and customs change, but the standard of character is eternal.

CHAPTER V.

Out-of-door habits—Alfred the Great, and Napoleon—Influence on a generous mind of wide possessions and the power they confer—Plantation life—Field school—"Old Hobby"—Mother's practice of reading with her children—The Great Audit—The widow's lot—Was Washington deficient in tenderness?—Softening power of pity—Early love affairs—Washington's later gravity—Love of children—Its advantages—Proofs of goodness of heart.

It was, as we have said, a life-long advantage to Washington to have been bred up with simple habits, an inextinguishable love of the open air, and a relish for out-door amusements. That he was so, is evident in all histories of him. He never liked to be in the house when the weather was fine; and it was one of the trials of his self-denying spirit, when he had become involved in state affairs, that he was obliged to spend so many days and weeks shut up in councils and offices, when his heart was longing for the free blue sky and the fresh bracing wind, for his horse and his gun.

We must be allowed to connect this hearty love of the country, its unceremonious and sincere habits and primitive interests, with the courage, the truthfulness, the industry, and the complete unaffectedness of Washington.

Cities have bred great men, but of another stamp. Alfred the Great, to whom Washington has been compared, loved the country quite as well, and we hardly hear of him any where else; Napoleon, the opposite of Washington in almost every thing, cared nothing about it, and never showed any desire for rural scenes and pleasures. Lord Bacon, between whose intellect and Washington's there must have been some resemblance of original structure, if we may judge from internal evidences to be gathered from their respective styles, only fully lived while he had trees over his head, and Mother Earth in all her freshness under his feet.

There must be something, too, in the possession of wide ancestral domains; in the habit of contemplating and planning for extensive tracts, with all their variety of aspect, production and value, and the feeling of independence and abundance induced by plantation life on a large scale. Even the fact of holding slaves, *when the holder is a George Washington*, with his high sense of responsibility and his never-failing humanity and respect for human nature, tends, like other aristocratic institutions, to bring out some excellent traits of character, for which there is comparatively little occasion in town life. A wide neighborhood of independent gentlemen, each a prince in his own domain, yet subject to that most efficient police, the opinion of his peers; in the constant interchange of civilities and kindnesses, but wholly free in the expression of sentiment;

must have afforded, when the main feature of their lives and habits had hardly yet been mooted as a moral, much less as a political question, grand soil for the production of manly and Christian virtues. Judging them by their times, and not by ours, by what they *did*, when occasion offered, rather than by what we *think*, now that there is comparatively little to be done for the happy land they left us, we must confess that plantation life wore then and there its best aspect, and offered its most effective strength; and that slavery did all it ever can do, and more than its wiser advocates will venture to claim for it in our day, in cultivation of the generous affections, and refinement of the manners of those who were born and bred to it. In Washington's early days there does not seem to have been a misgiving as to the nature of the institution, although there were very decided opinions as to the infamy of maltreatment of those helpless creatures, by any man who had a character to lose. In his *early* days, we say advisedly, for afterwards it was very different.

The plain, humble home on Pope's Creek; the stout, kind, planter papa, and serious, housewifely mother; that primitive and retired mode of life, and its various calls upon the higher elements of character, influenced, evidently, the whole future of the General, President, Benefactor of nations. He wore their impress through all the toils and all the honors that distinguished him from the rest of mankind. Through the whole of his grand career, whenever the pressure of duty relented,

he sprang back to rural life and its associations of pleasure and business, as the half-weaned child to its mother's bosom. It is recorded of him, that whenever he visited his old mother, he fell at once into the habits of his childhood.

One of the memoranda while he was attending court at Fredericksburg, runs thus:—

"Returned in the evening to mother's; all alone with her." What a distinct domestic picture do these little words draw! We can almost hear the fire sing on the hearth, and see the large snuff of the candle, grown up unperceived while mother and son sat talking.

Mr. Augustin Washington left the old farm on Pope's Creek when George was very young; indeed, some say soon after he was born; but only to exchange it for another, probably a better one, on the Rappahannock River, opposite Fredericksburg, a small town, situated about a mile and a half below the Falls on that river.

The same plain style of living continued, and George, now old enough to go to school, was sent to a schoolmaster, rough as the pines that nestled about the poor school-house; an old fellow named Hobby, one of Mr. Washington's tenants, who used to boast in after times, when he had become superannuated and somewhat addicted to strong potations, especially on the general's birthdays, that it was he, old Hobby, who, between his knees, had laid the foundations of George

Washington's greatness. The school was what was called in those days, in rural Virginia, a "field-school," perhaps not very unlike what in Ireland is called a hedge-school; a seminary of learning whose pretensions are bounded by the spelling-book and the New Testament, but which has graduated some very great men. The man who had the honor of teaching a, b, abs to Washington, pursued also the perhaps more suitable employment of sexton and grave-digger. He is not supposed to have discovered any peculiar promise in the blue-eyed urchin, who doubtless behaved very much like other heroes of his age; but after the greatness of his pupil became evident, he found wherewithal to make his boast, as was very natural.

And how can we deny his claim? for indeed Washington, or any body else, must have made a very poor figure in the world without a, b, abs!

Yet, without desiring to be ungrateful, we may be allowed to think that the mother's practice of reading with her children the best books she could find, in those days when books were books, had a good deal to do with the future character of one of them at least. Would that other mothers, inspired by this great success, would adopt the plan far more extensively than is now, as far as we can judge, thought necessary, or perhaps even desirable.

There is a volume, old and worn, yellow-leaved and thumb-marked, in the title-page of which "Mary Washington's" name was written long, long ago, while

yet she who bore that name was young and blooming. It is "Contemplations, Moral and Divine, by Sir Matthew Hale." Mr. Paulding saw the book, even had it in his possession, and was told by one of the family that Mrs. Washington was in the habit of reading it daily with her children.

Our present limits hardly admit of the insertion here of the marked passages which we may, without stretch of imagination, suppose to have especially influenced the mind of the boy; but the book may be found in any library, and it is worth while to look at it and trace the coincidences between its precepts and the peculiar traits of Washington.

One chapter, however, marked in the index and worn by frequent use, it may be well to make a little extract from. It is called "The Great Audit," and purports to be an account rendered by a good steward to the great Taskmaster.

"I never made use of my power or greatness to serve my own turns, either to heap up riches, or oppress my neighbor, or to revenge injuries, or to uphold injustice. For, though others thought me great, I knew myself to be still the same, and in all things, besides the due execution of my place, my deportment was the same as if I had been no such man; for I very well and practically knew that place, and honor, and preferment are things extrinsical. * * * Though I have loved my reputation, and have been careful not to lose or impair it by my own neglect, yet

I have looked upon it as a brittle thing that the devil aims to hit in an especial manner; a thing that is much in the power of a false report, a mistake or misapprehension to wound and hurt, and notwithstanding all my care, I am at the mercy of others without God's wonderful, overruling providence. And as my reputation is the esteem that others have of me, so that esteem may be blemished without my default. I have therefore always taken this care, not to set my heart upon my reputation. I will use all fidelity and honesty, and take care it shall not be lost by any default of mine; and if, notwithstanding all this, my reputation be soiled by evil or man, I will patiently bear it, and content myself with the serenity of my own conscience."

In reading Washington's letters, written in the midst of his trials, and after the greater of them were well over, we cannot but be struck with the similarity of expression, as well as sentiment, to those of Sir Matthew Hale. There is an old-fashioned directness; often a disposition to moralize, and always a serious tone, which is apt to become rather oppressive and chilling, in Washington's writings, where the subject is at all personal. He was never a man of high spirits, and we have reason to believe that even his boyhood was grave and considerate, in spite of his athletic sports and constant out-door amusements. Without these he might have been considered a dull person. Much reflection inevitably induces gravity, though it does not forbid

cheerfulness, and may easily be prevented, by exercise and amusement, from degenerating into gloom.

Although reserved in his manners, Washington was eminently social in his habits. Serious in his conversation, he was yet particularly conversible. His gravity was the result neither of moroseness nor of self-righteousness. His friends, however unseasonable or unreasonable—and they were sometimes both—always found him kind and patient; and, however faulty, never failed in their applications to him for aid and sympathy. His life, in fact, contradicted his manner, or his reputed manner. Nature had made him genial, circumstances stiffened his exterior. There was ample evidence of internal fire, though the snows outside were only occasionally melted. Left fatherless at a very early age, the stern tone of the mother seems to have overpowered the more genial manner of the Washington race.

From all accounts, Mrs. Mary Washington was a person of reserved manners and rather stern character. Her virtues were not adorned with the feminine sweetness which it is natural and proper to look for in a woman. At least this is certainly true of her later life. It may, however, have been partly the result of circumstances; for Mrs. Washington was left a widow with five children when George, her eldest, was but eleven years old, and although her husband owned a good deal of landed property, yet there was no great abundance of money; and, in order to keep the land,

and yet bring up her young family, the greatest economy and management were necessary.

To battle with the world under these circumstances, requires that a woman should harden herself a little, and it is not wonderful if sometimes the process goes on further than is necessary. But I have seen a portrait of this lady when she was still the fair Mary Ball; and I could not help fancying that the lofty forehead, determined brow, and cool, calm eye of the picture, prefigured well the high-spirited and keen matron, who in her old age replied to her son-in-law's kind offer to manage her business for her—

"You may keep my accounts, Fielding, for your eyesight is better than mine, but I can manage my affairs myself."

And to her son George, when he invited her to take up her abode with him:—"I thank you, George, but I prefer being independent." When General Lafayette called to see her, on the occasion of his first visit to this country, he found this mother of the great general and president at work in her garden, with an old sun-bonnet on. She came forward directly, to welcome the young French hero, saying, "I would not pay you so poor a compliment, marquis, as to stay to change my dress."

It is a current opinion that Washington was deficient in tenderness—a great fault if it were so. The grandest and manliest character is incomplete without tenderness. But, though our hero was imperfect, like

every body else, it does not seem to me quite just to deny him this quality. Many passages in his writings, and many things recorded of him, bespeak a kind and feeling heart, and it appears pretty plainly that though his sympathies were not universal, and though his manner was always restrained, he felt the sorrows and even the vexations of all in any way connected with him, to a degree totally incompatible with any supposition of lack of sensibility.

But a man who attains great eminence is doomed to find himself almost alone. It has often been said that a king can never have a friend, and the same is true of a man whose qualities and fortunes raise him far above his fellows. This state of comparative isolation necessarily brings on habits of reserve, for reserve becomes wisdom in such cases. The mind occupied with great interests, especially with great public services, can hardly find time for that frequency and fulness of private communion, which tends to nourish and keep active the tender feelings. The possession of power enables a great man to remedy at once many of the evils which, in ordinary circumstances, he could only pity; so that he half loses the habit of pity, one of the great softeners of the human heart. The constant necessity for self-control in great matters, must gradually extend its influence over all that can deeply move the feelings or sap the resolution. If one avenue must be guarded, so must all the rest. Duty may require that even friends must be forbidden the citadel. The sentinel must not

pause in his round to listen even to the pleadings of his mother.

Washington's early writings show plainly that he knew and felt what sentiment was, and his original susceptibility to tender emotions,—testified in particular by as lame love-verses as ever a boy of his age was guilty of—is proved by the general tone of his remarks on the young ladies that he met with. It is certain that there were times when he fancied himself a very unfortunate fellow, because certain fair damsels did not smile on him. But after he had fairly committed himself to business, and begun to feel the hardening of his sinews, mental and bodily, we hear no more of his being "undone," because a young lady "will not prove kind." He had by that time attained the robuster frame which says—

> What care I how fair she be,
> If she be not so for me?

He was always fond of ladies' society, enjoyed female conversation, and was interested in little matters that interested women, as we find by many of his letters. He had a great deal of taste, and showed it in dress, furniture and equipage, to which he gave, through his whole life, such attention as only a man whose taste formed an important part of his nature could have given under the circumstances. Old people in Philadelphia say that when he rode through the streets, it was noticed, in the universal attention which his

splendid appearance excited, that his horse's hoofs were blacked and polished as thoroughly as his own boots.

He loved children, and they loved him, although they held him in awful reverence. This reverence did not always please him, and he sometimes evinced a good deal of annoyance, when he found that his entrance interrupted the childish sports that he would have liked to witness. He has been seen for a quarter of an hour looking through the crack of the door on a party of young people, romping and playing blind-man's-buff. The more closely we study Washington's writings, the more prevailing will be the impression that the sacrifice of much indulgence of the softer emotions must be counted among the immense ones which he made to duty. If he could have lived the life he chose for himself—that of an intelligent and enterprising farmer, head of a family, generous host, kind neighbor, faithful friend, good citizen, guardian of the young, protector of the aged that Providence threw in his way,—there would, no doubt, have been a great modification in his manners, because there would necessarily have been one in his thoughts and feelings. Until the necessity for sternness or reserve arose, we hear nothing of it. While he was a private gentleman nobody seems to have thought of it. His friends, we find by his papers, take all sorts of liberties with his house, his table, his horses, his time. He has a dancing school at Mount Vernon, for the little Custises and some of the neighbors' children, and he keeps the dan-

cing-master and most of the scholars, not only to dinner, but till the next day, or even longer. He invites his miller and his miller's wife to dine, and goes every day to visit his negroes when they are ill. In short, there are few gentlemen of fortune so accessible, so universally hospitable, so careless of any exclusive dignity as Washington at home, and we know that it was in his own dear shades that he felt peculiarly himself. Every where else, he was in stiff, irksome harness, ever on the *qui vive*, or going the grand rounds, with every thing depending on the concentration of his attention and his power of self-abnegation.

A close study of his letters and private papers, produces the general impression of a very sympathetic nature, generously alive to the wants and wishes of others, but not often asking or wishing for a return in kind. This last may not improbably be the ground of a suspicion often brought forward, that Washington was in some sense a self-inclosed man. Whatever be the reason, he certainly asked very little sympathy or aid in private affairs. But we find him always conferring favors, always able to confer them. Few persons seem to have been necessary to him, and those few were such as could have required nothing from him but friendship. Lafayette, Hamilton, Knox, Greene, were his friends, and he is not devoid of demonstration towards them. Towards Lafayette he is urgent, tender and confidential. When he had offended Hamilton, at that time only half as old as himself, he humbled himself

to ask a reconciliation, which the fiery youth did not grant; and showed the sincerity of his regard by meeting, with ready warmth, the first relenting of that impulsive nature. Towards General Knox and his family, Washington's feelings and behavior were the kindly ones of an affectionate relative. To his wife he was always most attentive and indulgent, and from his marriage day he wore about his neck the miniature which was found on his cold bosom by those who performed the last offices for those august remains. The mere statesman or soldier would, long before that time, have cast aside the little memorial of domestic love and duty. Washington, who was truth itself, no doubt wore it always, as he first put it on, as a token and talisman of the tender and exclusive regard which he felt and cherished for the chosen partner of his life. As he had felt all a young man's love for the beautiful bride, so he retained an old man's affection and respect for the dignified matron and faithful helpmate of so many years. He adopted her children and grandchildren as his own, and left in their hearts and memories an uneffaceable impression of benignity and patient kindness, which none but a thoroughly good-hearted man could have produced. Abundant proof of this is extant, though too much diffused to be readily cited. The spirit of a man's life and character must be discovered by the contemplation of it as a whole. Detached instances, however numerous, always leave much untold.

CHAPTER VI.

A new school and new master—No Latin—A good head can make more out of one language than a poor one out of half a dozen—Washington head boy, of course—Military sports and national predilections—Washington a man of peace, after all—Early handwriting—Neatness of his school papers—Practice in mercantile forms—Robust physical exercises one grand element in his training—Pitching a stone—Love of horses and riding.

The school at Bridge's Creek, to which Washington was sent after his father's death, was kept by a Mr. Williams, a personage far superior to "Old Hobby," and who seems to have done what he undertook to do in a very creditable manner. Mr. Weems says of his school, that it was very thorough in common studies, and particularly in grammar and mathematics, which Williams considered his forte; but that the master "knew as little of Latin as Balaam's ass!" and of course could not teach it to his pupils, though some have supposed, from Washington's writings, that he could hardly have been ignorant of it. But, as many learn languages without thinking or caring what relation they bear to ideas; he, having well provided himself with ideas, managed always to find good sound language in which

to clothe them; not in every case strictly correct, perhaps, for he was not a "strict constructionist" in that respect; but clear, manly, direct, and free from verbiage, though sometimes losing a little in strength of statement from lack of culture. The study of his style is an antidote to pedantry, for we are all the time sensible of the greater importance of the idea than of the expression, as well as of the dignity which good sense and honesty give to the plainest language. Eminently practical throughout, Washington tried hard for such expression as he wanted, but left the further pursuit of fine writing to those who had more leisure.

"In all positions," says Guizot, "whether his language rise to the superior to whom he renders an account, or descend to the level of the subordinates who are under his orders, it is ever equally clear, practical and decided; equally stamped with that authority which truth and necessity confer upon the man who speaks in their name."

It is recorded of his school days that he was always head boy; and whether this report be authentic or not, we can easily imagine the case to have been so, not exclusively by means of scholarship, perhaps, but by the aid of certain other qualities, very powerful in school as elsewhere, and which he so amply exhibited in after life. His probity, courage, ability, and high sense of justice were probably evident, even then, for there is every reason to believe their foundations were laid very early. The boys would, therefore, respect him, and

choose him for an umpire in their little quarrels, as they are said to have done. "Ask George Washington," graphic Mr. Weems tells the story, "and whatever he says is right, we'll agree to." Most schools are happy enough to have at least one scholar thus respected for justice and honor.

But another source of George's popularity, was his military turn.* By some strange prophetic instinct—though indeed prophecy often works its own fulfilment—it was his pride to form his schoolmates into military companies, with cornstalks for muskets and calabashes for drums, and to drill and exercise them, to command them and lead them to sham-battle. He is said to have been famous for hindering quarrels, however, and perhaps his early taste for military manœuvres was only an accidental form of that love of mathematical combina-

* Mr. Irving, speaking of the military career and success of Lawrence Washington, says, page 22, Vol. I. "We have here the secret of that martial spirit so often cited of George in his boyish days. He had seen his brother fitted out for the wars. He had heard, by letters and otherwise, of the warlike scenes in which he was mingling. All his amusements took a military turn."

Also, on page 29. "Some of Lawrence's comrades of the Provincial Regiment, who had served with him in the West Indies, were occasional visitors at Mount Vernon; or a ship of war, possibly one of Vernon's old fleet, would anchor in the Potomac, and its officers would be welcome guests at the table of Lawrence and his father-in-law. Thus military scenes, on sea and shore, would become the topics of conversation. The capture of Porto Bello; the bombardment of Carthagena; old stories of cruisings in the East and West Indies, and campaigns against the pirates. We can picture to ourselves George, a grave and earnest boy, with an expanding intellect, and a deep-seated passion for enterprise, listening to such conversation with a kindling spirit, and a growing desire for military life."

tion (the marked trait of Napoleon's earlier years), and the tendency to order, promptness and thoroughness, which characterized him so strikingly in after life. The good soldier is by no means a man with a special disposition to fight.

But there was a political bias, in this sport too; for the boy army was arranged in two bands, one of them personating an English and the other a French force, always an antagonistic idea to the English, and at that time obnoxious in the colonies,—the latter troop commanded by a lad named William Bustle, the former always by George Washington. It is rather remarkable that so exciting a sport did not end in quarrels if not in enmity, for the temperament of Washington was impetuous and his passions fiery, though we are little accustomed to think so, from our habit of contemplating his after life, so marked by self-control. He was known as a peacemaker, even thus early, and we have every reason to believe that peace continued to be his darling wish and pursuit, through all the struggles and oppositions that duty led him to engage in. His military turn was in-bred, not in-born. When, in after life, he was charged with having said "I have heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound"—he answered, not without some show of embarrassment and regret, "If I ever said so, it was when I was very young." He never felt so in his later years.

The precious little box of his private papers, before

mentioned as being in the safe-keeping of the State Department at the seat of government, may almost be called the autobiography of Washington. There you see, side by side with the persevering and methodical accounts he kept in his later days, some books of perhaps fifty years earlier date—showing just a general resemblance in the handwriting—which were made, no doubt, while at school at Bridge's Creek, and which contain his arithmetical exercises. It was the good custom, in those days, to write down in a permanent and referable form, the whole arithmetical process, from the rule and the question to the answer; the operation at once fixing the facts learned, upon the memory, and endowing the head with business-like habits and with a knowledge of mercantile forms, to fully appreciate which, one must have experienced the benefit of it in one's self, and suffered from the lack of it in others. We feel certain, in looking over those well-worn pages, that nobody ever encountered even unintentional injustice in dealing with the man who kept them, and also that he himself enjoyed to the full the comfortable security and self-confidence that such attention to business always earns. And by the simplest eye the advantages suggested by the journal and ledger of 1769 to 1774, may be seen to grow out of the careful school-books of 1743, and the minute surveying details of 1748; just as a deeper view may perhaps discover in the honesty and simplicity of the early character and education of Washington, the circumstances

that made him ready, when the great need came, to found a republic.

Among the items of Washington's early training, we must not omit to mention the robust physical exercises to which he subjected himself, prompted naturally by his sense of great bodily power, and incited still more by the pleasure of companionship; for it seems to have been much the fashion to try strength in running, leaping, pitching the bar, wrestling, &c. An old governor of Virginia, Nicholson, had, long before, instituted public games, and distributed prizes for proficiency in all these athletic sports. Washington was early able to manage a fiery horse, and to use and confirm his own strong sinews by feats that none of his companions could equal. Whatever stirred his blood and brought his muscles into vigorous exercise was his delight. His young lady companions complained sometimes, we are told, that George cared nothing for their company, but would always be out of doors; and an old gentleman of the neighborhood is quoted as saying, in after years,—"Egad! he ran wonderfully! We had nobody hereabouts that could come near him. There was young Langhorne Dade, of Westmoreland, a confounded clean-made, tight young fellow, and a mighty swift runner, too, but he was no match for George."

Colonel Lewis Willis, his playmate and kinsman, had "often seen him throw a stone across the Rappahannock, at the lower ferry of Fredericksburg,"— a feat, it seems, not very likely to be equalled in our

days. The story of his having ridden to death a fiery colt of his mother's, which nobody else dared to back, sounds a little too much like a modernized version of Alexander's taming Bucephalus; so we shall not repeat it here. It is said that the good lady was very much provoked but said, "I can forgive you, because you came at once and confessed it. If you had skulked, I should have despised you."

The taste for athletic exercises continued with him through life. It happened once, after he was quite an old man,—or at least so old that young men did not think of his joining in their trials of strength,—that some of his young relations or friends were exercising themselves at pitching a very heavy stone, when Washington happened to be passing. He stood for a few minutes looking on, as he generally did when sports were going forward; then, as the furthest throw was measured, saying, "I think I can beat that, yet!" he took up the huge stone, sent it far beyond the most distant mark, and quietly walked on.

His hands were remarkably large, unduly developed, perhaps by the severe uses to which he put them in his youth. They were also very strong. Mr. Paulding, who enjoyed the advantage of intimate acquaintance with the family, and much talk with Jeremy, an old servant of Washington, heard from one of his near relatives an anecdote illustrative of this.

"We were sitting," said this gentleman, "in the little parlor fronting the river, on the right as you en-

ter the portico. The general and several others were present—among them two young men remarkable for their strength, when a large backlog rolled from the chimney out on the hearth. The general took the tongs, and very deliberately, without apparent effort, put it back in its place. A quarter of an hour afterwards he went out, and the ease with which he handled it became the subject of remark. The log was taken down and not a man of us could lift, much less put it in place again. Finally, one with the tongs and another with the shovel, we all set to, and succeeded in replacing it. The general, though remarkably strong in all his limbs, was particularly so in his hands and fingers."

All his life long he was at home on horseback, and traditions concur in representing him as making a grand figure there. He was popularly called "the best rider in Virginia," where all are riders. Mr. Smyth says—"a Virginian will walk five miles to catch a horse to ride one." In his early letters he has an intimate way of talking about horses, which shows not only how important they were to him, but how close an acquaintance he had with them, and how well he knew how to take care of them. He inherited from his mother a love of good horses, for this was one of her characteristic traits. We should judge from his life and letters that he spent at least half of his three score and eight years on horseback. This could not have favored his being a graceful walker, and accord-

Washington arresting a Poacher at Mount Vernon.

ingly we hear that he was not such; but his great length of limb preserved him from being like the jockey who "always walked as if he had a horse under him." He had a direct, business-like manner of walking. Mr. Custis says, "a straight, methodical, Indian walk," but as an Indian walks with his toes turned in, it seems hardly probable that Washington's appearance would have been as dignified as we know it to have been, if he had allowed this strikingly ungraceful fault in his carriage to become habitual. He was very careful of his appearance, being a person of great natural taste; and one who had a just estimate of its importance in regard to the impression we make on strangers. His personal appearance was sure to be the theme of strangers who saw him for the first time. They were always impressed by it, not so much in the form of admiration as of reverence, though it was said, again and again, that whatever the splendor of the company or the procession, George Washington attracted every eye, so that others were hardly seen.

CHAPTER VII.

Washington little indebted to books—Early reading limited, but good—His mother's idea of true kindness—Habit of writing a great deal—Its advantages and possible disadvantages—How it affected Washington's after life—Poetry book—"Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior"—Their influence on his character—His style of writing, excellent, plain, pure English.

WASHINGTON was comparatively little indebted to books. We find in a memorandum of 1748, at which time he was sixteen years old, "Read to the reign of King John. In the Spectator, read to No. 143." But whatever he learned, he learned well. He was very industrious as well as ambitious, and he had no opportunity, in his school-days, of slipping through a great school, getting other boys to do his tasks for him, or wheedling out of his mamma a "written excuse," wholly invented for the occasion, thus acquiring, in the most effectual way, habits of both idling and falsehood. His mother was not one of those who so mistake the nature of true kindness, and his second schoolmaster—the only one besides "old Hobby,"—was not without enthusiasm in his profession. He left a very good name behind him in his part of the country. He often boasted—and how natural it was for Washington's

teachers to boast!—that he had "made George Washington as good a scholar as himself." That he exacted a good deal of application and exactness, is evident from the manuscript books which Washington wrote when under his care. It used to be, much more than it is now, the fashion for teachers to require of their scholars a great deal of writing, besides that of the copy-book. To the "ciphering-book" we have before alluded. Into it all the rules of arithmetic, and the most difficult sums done under them, were copied with great care and elaborate flourishes, by way of exercise of the hand, and particularly for the sake of improvement in writing numerals. Another book contained the whole course of book-keeping, with imaginary accounts and names, picked up by the writer as he went along, all drawn up in the scholar's grandest style, with ranks, phalanxes and spaces, so as to look not a little like plans of battle. This was intended to bring book-keeping to a sort of practice, and also to exercise the pupil in ornamental writing, and in the art of making elegant and fanciful capital letters.

Then there was, not so generally, but often, a "Poetry-book," into which the pupil was allowed, by way of privilege, in leisure hours, to copy poetical pieces which he admired and wished to preserve or commit to memory. These books, many of which are still extant, yellow with age and use, in careful old families, are often very curious, as showing the floridness of youthful taste, before criticism has chastened, or the fear of ridi-

cule suppressed it. A short piece copied in Washington's hand we shall insert here, because it is characteristic, and seems to embody a common-sense, unromantic idea of domestic life, such as he always cherished. It is not very poetical; if it had been, he would not probably have selected it. We could wish it otherwise in this great and good life, for "the experience of any one's own mind may teach the inadequacy of mere actual truth. Has not every one felt, at the time when any deep emotion stirred him, or any lofty thought animated him, what imperfect exponents of such emotions or thoughts his words or actions are?"* It would have been a comfort and support to Washington to love and study poetry. But he was preoccupied, and did not recognize the want of it. These homely lines enclose a convenient formula, about as compact and comprehensive as the immortal memory-verses, "Thirty days hath September," &c., easy to remember and carry about with one.

TRUE HAPPINESS.

These are the things, which, once possessed,
Will make a life that's truly blest:
A good estate on healthy soil,
Not got by vice, nor yet by toil;
Round a warm fire a pleasant joke,
With chimney ever free from smoke;
A strength entire, a sparkling bowl,
A quiet wife, a quiet soul;
A mind as well as body whole;

* Henry Reed.

Prudent simplicity, constant friends,
A diet which no art commends,
A merry night without much drinking,
A happy thought without much thinking;
Each night by quiet sleep made short,
A will to be but what thou art;
Possessed of these, all else defy,
And neither wish nor fear to die.
These are the things which, once possessed
Will make a life that's truly blest.

The books into which such things are copied are usually large, awkward pamphlet ones, with marbled paper covers; the leaves of a stout foolscap, that would bear scratching out an occasional blot, or an ill-executed letter. The style and condition of these paper books were of great importance to the scholar, for premiums were often given for the neatest and most correct of them. Washington left several, which it gives one quite a thrill to open and handle, ever so reverently. They date as far back as his twelfth year, and contain some lessons in geometry, treasured by his mother, no doubt, as evidences of her boy's application and neatness. One is filled with a great variety of business forms—bills of exchange, receipts, bonds, indentures, bills of sale, land-warrants, leases, deeds and wills, all written carefully and in imitation of lawyer's style.

Still more valuable than business forms are the thirty pages containing "Rules of Behavior in Company and Conversation." The import and value of these rules are various, ranging from a caution against

"drumming with your fingers on the table," to a recommendation of reverence when the Highest Name is mentioned. It is very evident that these very rules, copied and conned at thirteen, were indelibly imprinted on Washington's memory, and inwoven into his habits of thought and action; and that having once secured the assent of his taste, reason and conscience, they continued effective throughout his life, and helped to guard him against instinctive selfishness, arrogance, and the assaults of his own passions, as well as against any encroachment on the rights and feelings of others. When we reflect how striking was ever the courtesy and appropriateness of his behavior, under every variety of circumstances, it becomes most interesting to read, in the stiff boyish hand of that early time, such rules as these:—

"Every action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present.

"In the presence of others sing not to yourself with humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

"Sleep not when others speak, sit not when others stand, speak not when you should hold your peace, walk not when others stop.

"Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking; jog not the table or desk on which another reads or writes; lean not on any one.

"Be no flatterer, neither play with any one that delights not to be played with.

"Read no letters, books, or papers in company; but

when there is a necessity for doing it, you must ask leave. Come not near the books or writings of any one so as to read them, unless desired, nor give your opinion of them unasked; also, look not nigh when another is writing a letter.

"Let your countenance be pleasant, but in serious matters somewhat grave.

"Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were your enemy.

"When you meet with any one of greater quality than yourself, stop and retire, especially if it be at a door or any strait place, to give way for him to pass.

"They that are in dignity, or in office, have in all places precedency, but whilst they are young they ought to respect those that are their equals in birth, or other qualities, though they have no public charge.

"Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.

"In visiting the sick, do not presently play the physician, if you be not knowing therein.

"When a man does all he can, though it succeeds not well, blame not him that did it.

"Being to advise, or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, presently or at some other time, in what terms to do it; and in reproving show no signs of choler, but do it with sweetness and mildness.

"Take all admonitions thankfully, in what time or place soever given; but afterwards, not being culpable,

take a time or place convenient to let him know it that gave them.

"Mock not, nor jest at any thing of importance; break no jests that are sharp-biting, and if you deliver any thing witty and pleasant, refrain from laughing thereat yourself.

"Wherein you reprove another, be unblamable yourself, for example is more prevalent than precepts.

"Play not the peacock, looking every where about you to see if you be well-decked, if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly, and your clothes handsomely.

"Associate yourself with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation, for it is better to be alone than in bad company.

"Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for it is a sign of a tractable and commendable nature, and in all causes of passion, admit reason to govern.

"Utter not base and frivolous things among grave and learned men; nor very difficult questions or subjects among the ignorant; nor things hard to be believed.

"Speak not of doleful things in time of mirth, nor at the table; speak not of melancholy things, as death, and wounds, and if others mention them, change, if you can, the discourse. Tell not your dreams, but to your intimate friend.

"Break not a jest where none takes pleasure in mirth; laugh not aloud, nor at all without occasion.

Deride no man's misfortune, though there seem to be some cause.

"Be not forward, but friendly and courteous; the first to salute, hear, and answer; and be not pensive when it is time to converse.

"Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commending.

"If two contend together, take not the part of either unconstrained, and be not obstinate in your own opinion; in things indifferent, be of the major side.

"Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of others, and ask not how they came. What you may speak in secret to your friend, deliver not before others.

"Think before you speak, pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly.

"When another speaks, be attentive yourself, and disturb not the audience. If any hesitate in his words, help him not, nor prompt him without being desired; interrupt him not, nor answer him till his speech be ended.

"Be not apt to relate news, if you know not the truth thereof. In discoursing of things you have heard, name not your author always. A secret discover not.

"Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise.

"When you deliver a matter, do it without passion, and with discretion, however mean the person be you do it to.

"In disputes, be not so desirous to overcome, as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion; and submit to the judgment of the major part, especially if they are judges of the dispute.

"Make no show of taking great delight in your victuals; feed not with greediness; cut your bread with a knife; lean not on the table; neither find fault with what you eat.

"Set not yourself at the upper end of the table; but if it be your due, or that the master of the house will have it so, contend not, lest you should trouble the company.

"When you speak of God or his attributes, let it be seriously and in reverence. Honor and obey your natural parents, though they be poor.

"Let your recreations be manful, not sinful.

"Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called Conscience."

Some distinguished person, but who it was I cannot now recall, said that he could not help looking upon Washington's character as connected with the early selection and adoption of these rules, and thinking they lay at the foundation of all.

From what repository these and the remaining maxims in the collection were drawn, we know not, but they wear the air of having been culled from various sources. Their having been copied out fairly into a book would hardly be worth a passing remark, were it not for the striking correspondence between these pre-

cepts and the after life of the writer, proving him to be

Endued
With sanctity of reason,

to keep unbroken that connection between convictions and conduct, the unnatural severing of which causes half the crime and wretchedness of the world. Washington's efforts to live up to his own notions of what was right, began very early, as we know by the respect he inspired.

The old-fashioned practice of writing down so many things, may seem too slow for our steamy days, but it undoubtedly had its advantages. A good handwriting, with the power of correct and neat copying, is of invaluable benefit to a boy who has his living to get, and the world before him, where to choose. Nothing, without practice, will give him these things. That George Washington found life-long advantage in this practice of writing what boys nowadays never write, seems very evident; and it is probable that his teacher, Mr. Williams, ought to have a share of the world's gratitude for Washington's accurate and patient business habits, as well as for the elegant and indefatigable penmanship which distinguished him.

But among the good effects of so much writing, it may be questioned whether there was not one bad one. An old proverb says, "He that depends on a paper memory will soon find that he has no other." One of Washington's pen-habits was to make minutes of every

thing that occurred, and especially of every thing connected with his duties. Books full of these form a considerable part of his private manuscripts; and the exactness with which he performed even the smallest duties, was unquestionably owing, in no small degree, to these ceaseless reminders. But we find his memory growing very treacherous in his latter days, so much so that he could not rely upon it; and although he himself observes more than once, "I always had a poor memory," yet this "always" can hardly refer further back than to the time when he began to make a "paper memory."

But even though this result of memorandum-making were certain, it need not throw the least discredit upon the custom of much writing, since the extreme is only a casual misapplication of what is, in its right use, greatly advantageous.

It is certain that without Washington's power over the pen, and his application to it, he could never have been the man he was; his mind never could have carried safely a multitude of the most important as well as the most minute affairs; he could not have been so impartially just to all, absent as well as present. Without the power of expression which he acquired by its constant use, he could not have produced the same effect on the mind of the country, and consequently would not have stood where he now stands in its love and reverence. "To the achievements of his indefatigable pen," says Mr. Irving, "we may trace the

most fortunate turns in the current of our Revolutionary affairs."

A handsome and free handwriting is an ordinary accomplishment among us at the present time; would that the power and habit of writing good, clear, forcible English were equally common! We have too many rich and prosperous people who cannot write a page without errors of construction, if not of grammar and spelling. This is the more noticeable, because the diffusion of intelligence is so considerable, and the intelligence of these very persons in other directions, so obvious. The defect must certainly be charged upon teachers or modes of teaching. The schoolmaster who is "abroad" just now, is evidently not an elocutionist. The number of branches taught in schools is much greater than in Washington's time; is there less stress laid upon the fundamental ones—the humble stepping-stones to the pretentious "ologies?"

Washington's simple, direct, idiomatic English may, notwithstanding certain imperfections, be advantageously studied as the groundwork of a good style—one worthy to supplant the more artificial and half borrowed one now quite fashionable. His rhetoric will not always bear criticism, and he repeats his metaphors and similes too often, as if his mind, intent only upon clear and forcible expression, never gave variety a thought. But the idea is always there, and he has no art of words to cover the want of ideas. He sometimes uses too many words; perhaps, like a certain clergy-

man who was accused of long sermons, he "had not time to write shorter;" but the thought is never obscured, nor does verbosity suggest a suspicion of insincerity. Writing letters may almost be said to have been the great business of his life, and the amount of wisdom and goodness conveyed and made permanent in those letters is most wonderful.

At the present day, a letter of his is framed and handed down as an heirloom, though it may contain but three lines with the immortal signature.

CHAPTER VIII.

Esteem of his brothers for Washington—Lawrence always his friend and benefactor—Fortunes of the family—George at Mount Vernon—Receives a midshipman's warrant—Gives way to his mother's wishes and stays at home—Learns military tactics and fencing—Contents himself with learning to be a good surveyor—Extreme accuracy of his papers—Old desk—Curious memorandum.

THERE is no question that Washington—though far from being considered a prodigy—early attracted an unusual amount of notice in his family and neighborhood. This was owing as much to his character as to his talents, which were not of the brilliant order. His half-brother Lawrence, fourteen years older than himself, had a peculiar affection for him. Lawrence had been sent, as was the fashion of the times, to seek in England the education which this country did not then afford, and he had afterwards been induced to join the armament sent by Great Britain, in 1740, to the West Indies, against the French and Spanish who had committed some aggressions. Here he distinguished himself and won the confidence and respect of the British commanders, Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth. He intended to go to England, and to remain and seek

promotion in the army, in which he already held a captain's commission; but having fallen in love with a neighbor, Miss Anne Fairfax, daughter of William Fairfax, a near relation to the eccentric lord of that name, he staid at home to be married, and soon after settled down on the farm in Fairfax County allotted to him by his father, which he afterward named Mount Vernon, in honor of the gallant admiral. This marriage and removal were nearly contemporary with the sudden death of the father, which took place on the 12th of April, 1745, when George, who was absent from home at the time, was thirteen years of age.

The death of Mr. Augustin Washington had produced a great change in the family affairs. The large landed and other property which he had managed, was now divided among his children. George's share was the house and lands on the Rappahannock, but the entire property of the children under age was left under the care and management of the widow, in whose judgment and capacity her husband seems to have had an unbounded confidence, which speaks well for them both. If it requires an uncommonly wise woman to manage important affairs well, it is at least equally rare to find a man who is liberal enough to believe his wife capable of doing so. Mrs. Washington justified her husband's opinion of her; brought up her children and took care of their property, like a firm, high-minded, sensible woman, as she was, and had the great reward of seeing her affairs prosperous, and her children all respectable

and happy, while one of them was destined, even in her own day and under her very eyes, to transcend the ordinary sons of men in character, as much as he was favored by Providence with an unequalled field for the development and display of his peculiar talents.

Augustin, the other surviving son of the first marriage, had married another neighbor, Miss Anne Aylett, daughter of William Aylett of Westmoreland County, and had settled in the old homestead at Bridge's Creek. Thither was George sent after the father's death, to go to school. There was no more sending to England for education now, but strict economy, and a desire to fit George to earn for himself the competency, which the divided estate could not supply to so extended a family. His mother seems to have limited her ambition for her eldest boy, to making him an intelligent, honest and thriving planter, able to survey his own land and other people's, to keep accounts with exactness, and to be a proficient in country business, in which was of course included the practice of hunting and fishing. Plantation life included her ideas of happiness, usefulness and respectability, as we may gather from her hearty exclamation, long after, when somebody was telling her of the great things her son was doing—

"Oh dear! I *do* wish George would stay at home and take care of his plantation!"

While George was living with his brother Augustin at Bridge's Creek, Lawrence, who was very fond of him, had him often at Mount Vernon, where was at all times

to be found the best society in the country, and particularly that of the Fairfax family, who were well-bred though somewhat eccentric people. William Fairfax, the father-in-law of Lawrence and the owner of a fine seat on the Potomac, a few miles below Mount Vernon, was a cousin of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, of Greenway Court, the proprietor, by grant from the crown, of the whole immense tract of land between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers. The acquaintance with these men of great wealth and distinction, then made at Mount Vernon, proved of immense and controlling importance to George Washington. William Fairfax who had served in both the East and West Indies, and had also held the position of governor of New Providence; and Lord Fairfax, an Oxford scholar who had run a fashionable course in London, were both men of mark and discernment, as well as of friendly and kind feelings. It was probably through these influential friends, that Lawrence procured for his brother George a midshipman's warrant, with which, in his fourteenth year, he was to have joined a ship-of-war, but for the unwillingness of his mother to part with her eldest-born so early, and for so dangerous a profession. Some of her friends blamed her for this demur, and called it weakness. One writes, "I am afraid Mrs. Washington will not keep to her first resolution. She seems to dislike George's going to sea, and says several persons have told her it was a bad scheme. She offers several trifling objections, such as fond, unthinking mothers

habitually suggest, and I find that one word against his going has more weight with her than ten for it."

"Fond, unthinking mothers!" We are rather glad that Mrs. Washington ever seemed such a mother. She has so stern a reputation, that we like to ascribe to her a little amiable weakness. The young man himself seems to have shown his good sense and good feeling in the matter; for, although every preparation had been made, and his clothes had actually been sent on board, we hear nothing of his repining at the decision of his mother. Mr. Fairfax writes of him at the time to Lawrence,—"George has been with us, and says he will be steady, and thankfully follow your advice as his best friend."

So a project which must have been very fascinating to a young, warm imagination, was quietly abandoned, and the youth, in the dutiful spirit which ever characterized him, went back to school, to prepare himself for entering upon the comparatively humble business of a surveyor, in connection with the ordinary duties and occupations of a planter's life, and that on a very moderate scale.

Had he, even then, an inward consciousness of irresistible ability and force of character, that made the particular mode of his entrance upon life a matter of comparative indifference to him? Who can say?

One of the incidental advantages of Washington's visits at Mount Vernon, was the training in military exercises which he there received, from an old adjutant

named Muse, who had served with Lawrence before Carthagena, and who fanned the rising flame in the breast of the future soldier, by lending him books on military tactics, and encouraging him to study them, by recitals of adventures and descriptions of battles that the veteran had shared in. When we add to this that young Washington had also lessons in fencing, from Mr. Van Braam, who afterwards served as his interpreter, we have before us what seems almost a whole chapter of express preparation for the remarkable career he was destined for. In daily communication with gallant gentlemen who had served, and who retained a good deal of martial ardor, how could a boy of sixteen but feel the blood stirring in his veins with the desire to imitate at once their accomplishments and their past doings? When he caught sight of a handsome, tall, athletic figure as he passed the mirrors of Mount Vernon or Belvoir, did not his heart beat quick at thought of dashing uniforms and waving plumes?

Yet Washington went quietly to work as a surveyor, and was delighted when Lord Fairfax sent him, with his nephew, to make a complete account and description of the immense tracts of mountain land which the nobleman owned in the back part of Virginia. He had, before this time, shown a decided liking for geometry, trigonometry and surveying, which, as the profession of a surveyor was, at that time, particularly profitable, his friends had encouraged; and he pursued these studies with characteristic earnestness. The last two

years of his school life were given principally to the theory and practice of the art which laid the foundation of his large fortune, not only by the opportunity it gave him of purchasing new lands advantageously, but by the habits he then acquired of calculation, accuracy and neatness, so useful to him through all the important affairs which devolved upon him in after life. When, by way of practice, he surveyed the little domain around the school-house, the plots and measurements were entered in his book with all the care and precision required for important business; and if an erasure was necessary, it was done with a penknife, and so neatly that the error can scarcely be perceived.

"Nor was his skill," says Mr. Sparks, "confined to the more simple processes of the art. He used logarithms, and proved the accuracy of his work by different methods. The manuscripts fill several quires of paper, and are remarkable for the care with which they were kept, the neatness and uniformity of the handwriting, the beauty of the diagrams, and a precise method and arrangement in copying out tables and columns of figures. These particulars will not be thought too trivial to be mentioned, when it is known that he retained similar habits through life. His business papers, day-books, ledgers and letter-books, in which, before the Revolution, no one wrote but himself, exhibit specimens of the same studious care and exactness. Every fact occupies a clear and distinct place. * * * * The constructing of tables, diagrams, and other figures

relating to numbers or classification, was an exercise in which he seems at all times to have taken much delight."*

We may mention as one of many proofs of the life-long simplicity of Washington's habits, the writing-desk which he commonly used when at home—an unpainted one, evidently the work of a common carpenter, who made the inside divisions, under the direction of the owner, to fit his various papers. This is in the possession of Mr. Custis.

Of the homeliness of his early life we gather a hint in the memorandum, written in his boyish hand of 1747, of articles intrusted to his washer-woman:

"Delivered to Mrs. Humphrey, this 30th day of October, 2 Shirts, the one marked G. W., the other not marked; 1 pr. of Hose and one Band, to be washed against the November Court in Frederick."

* Sparks' Life—p. 8.

CHAPTER IX.

First surveying tour—Groves of sugar trees—Indian dance—People that wouldn't speak English—Rough living—Good pay—Tender passion—Poetic taste not very prominent—Lord Fairfax—Planter life—High-bred manners—Letters to ladies.

It was in March, 1748, that Washington set out, in company with Mr. George Fairfax and a small party, to explore immense tracts of wild wood-lands, in the Allegany mountains. These forests were almost totally destitute of white settlers, and, we may say, of human succor; for the Indians that were sometimes met there were of ferocious habits, and looked upon the whites as objects of plunder, if not of cruelty. This was no pleasure trip, we may be sure, such as a week's hunting in the woods may afford to the weary townsman, who finds rest in exchanging his mattress for cedar boughs, and a luxurious table for bacon roasted on a skewer. It was very serious earnest, involving both fatigue and danger, and there must have been something very remarkable about a boy of sixteen, whom Lord Fairfax, shrewd and keen-eyed as he was,

intrusted with it. The young surveyor was accompanied by William Fairfax, brother of Mrs. Lawrence Washington, but Washington himself was the practical and responsible person. He had just been licensed as a public surveyor, which entitled him to enter his surveys in the county offices. The business proved very arduous, the weather being unfavorable, and provisions and accommodations very poor. The diary kept by Washington on this occasion has no particular interest, except the fact of its having been kept at all by a boy of sixteen, and the evidence it gives of his manly feeling at that age. No one who did not know his age, would take the writer to be less than of full man's estate, unless by the notice taken of small matters, which an older surveyor of wild Indian lands would be too much accustomed to, to think of mentioning. When they reached Lord Fairfax's land on the Shenandoah river, they "went through most beautiful groves of sugar trees, and spent the best part of the day in admiring the trees and the richness of the land."

This was the very first outset, and the boy was still a boy. A year later he would not have spent "the best part of the day" so. He too soon gave up such pleasures, and became duty's bondsman, to an extent which made him old and grave before his time, though he never lost his relish for fine woodland scenery.

A few days after this touch of natural enthusiasm, we find him describing an Indian dance:—

"23d.—Rained till about two o'clock, and then

cleared up, when we were agreeably surprised at the sight of more than thirty Indians, coming from war with only one scalp. We had some liquor with us, of which we gave them a part. This, elevating their spirits, put them in the humor of dancing. We then had a war dance. After clearing a large space, and making a great fire in the middle, the men seated themselves around it, and the speaker made a grand speech, telling them in what manner they were to dance. After he had finished, the best dancer jumped up, as one awakened from sleep, and ran and jumped about the ring in the most comical manner. He was followed by the rest. Then began their music, which was performed with a pot half full of water, and a deer skin stretched tight over it, and a gourd with some shot in it to rattle, and a piece of horse's tail tied to it to make it look fine. One person kept rattling, and another drumming all the while they were dancing"

Amid mention of "hard at work all day," and "swam our horses over the Potomac," comes the following entry:—

"Travelled up to Solomon Hedges', *Esquire*, one of *His Majesty's Justices of the Peace*, in the county of Frederick, where we camped. When we came to supper there was neither a knife on the table, nor a fork to eat with; but as good luck would have it, we had knives of our own."

Washington's italics here (for they are his), hint that the two young men had a good deal of fun between

themselves at the disproportion between their host's titles and the style of his living.

"April 2d.—A blowing, rainy night. Our straw, upon which we were lying, took fire, but I was luckily preserved by one of our men awakening when it was in a flame."

The writer complains, April 4th, that some ignorant people—"almost as ignorant as the Indians"—who followed them about while they were surveying certain lots, "would never speak English, but when spoken to they all spoke Dutch,"—probably for the best possible reason.

On the 8th, after William Fairfax had left the party, "We camped in the woods, and after we had pitched our tent and made a large fire, we pulled out our knapsack to recruit ourselves. Every one was his own cook. Our spits were forked sticks; our plates were large chips. As for dishes, we had none."

This journey occupied a spring month's time, and Washington mentions his sleeping in a house as a rare occurrence, though the weather was "very inclement for the season." In a letter of the period he says: "After walking a good deal all the day, I have lain down before the fire on a little hay or a bear-skin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife and children, like dogs and cats; and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire. * * * I have never had my clothes off, but have lain and slept in them, except the few nights we slept at Fredericksburg." But we have

a very significant addition. "Nothing would make it pass off tolerably but a good reward. A doubloon is my constant gain every day that the weather will permit of my going out; sometimes six pistoles."

This kind of life he kept up for three years, under circumstances of such fatigue and exposure that he could make but short trips at a time, being obliged to return to the settlements to recruit. And this was not sufficient to prevent some constitutional injury, which he felt throughout his life. The labor and exposure were premature, and we should be sorry to hold up Washington's example in this respect to growing boys of his age.

Young as he was, the letters referring to a hopeless passion for some "lowland beauty," are supposed to have been written at this time. But however sincere the subjection and the despair of seventeen, it is certain that in this case, business soon drove away all ill effect of either, and doubloons and pistoles exercised their usual fascinations, deferring the capitulation of that stout, though susceptible heart, for a good many years. There is the beginning of an acrostic on the beloved name of Miss "Frances Alexander," which may perhaps have been the production of the same time of life; but as it is only a beginning, atrociously bad in point of poetical execution, and evidently given up (after the X) by the author himself, I shall, by the golden rule, forbear giving the fragments, especially as all former ferrets among the Washington papers, set

me the example of reticence in this matter. The effort to express passionate thoughts in verse, is common to almost all ardent minds; but the education of Bridge's Creek had not been that which can render such expression easy or graceful. Mrs. Mary Washington evidently had not fed her little ones with the story of

> Pelop's line,
> Or the tale of Troy divine.

If albums had been fashionable in Washington's days, which, happily for him, they were not, he would have written in them—for he was a gallant man, and could refuse nothing to a lady—either like General Jackson, a verse or two from Watts' hymns, or some couplets of "True Happiness if you would find," early embalmed in his note-book, and doubtless in his memory. The poetic vein, not having been exercised in that way, seems to have undergone absorption, and, while it may have enriched the rest of his nature, never made any further manifestations of its own. We must congratulate ourselves on the failure, for who knows where we might have been now, if Washington had turned out a poet?

The survey was so performed, as to more than satisfy Lord Fairfax, whose esteem for his rising young neighbor seems to have gone on increasing for many years. Washington was a frequent guest in the family, and remained its attached friend to the end of his days.

Speaking of this early commission of Lord Fairfax, Mr. Weems says:—

"Little did the old gentleman expect that he was raising a youth that should one day dismember the British empire, and break his own heart—which truly came to pass. For, on hearing that Washington had captured Cornwallis and all his army, he called out to his black waiter, "Come, Joe! carry me to my bed, for I'm sure it's high time for me to die!"

And then follows a poetic version of the legend, after the manner of the ancient ballad:—

Then up rose Joe, all at the word,
And took his master's arm,
And to his bed he softly led
The lord of Greenway farm.

There thrice he call'd on Britain's name,
And thrice he wept full sore;
Then sighed,—O Lord, thy will be done,
And word spake never more.

And die he did, certainly, in 1782, but not prematurely, for he lived to be ninety-two, a much liked and very benevolent person, though rather eccentric.

The business of surveying, at that early day very profitable, had the further advantage of introducing Washington to the favorable notice of landholders and men of influence, whom his merits very naturally made his fast friends, and under whose auspices he found all the employment his health and strength allowed him to undertake. These acquaintances were first his em-

ployers, then his friends, afterwards his advocates with those in authority when office was in question; further on, when the great struggle began, his admiring companions and colleagues; and thence onward to the end of his career, his firm adherents and supporters, feeling only too much honored in being counted among his neighbors and compatriots, when he had become known as one of the master spirits of the world.

There is a rude picture, drawn by no favorable hand, of the inferior order of plantation life at that early time.

"The gentleman of fortune," says Smyth, "rises at nine o'clock, and perhaps may make an excursion to the stables, some fifty yards from the house. Returns and breakfasts, between nine and ten, on tea, coffee, bread and butter, and very thin slices of venison or hung beef. He then lies down on a pallet on the floor, in the coolest room in the house, in his shirt and trowsers only, with a negro at his head and another at his feet, to fan him and keep off the flies.

"Between twelve and one he takes a glass of *bombo* or toddy—a liquor compounded of water, sugar, rum and nutmeg, made weak and kept cool. Dines between two and three, and at every table, whatever else there may be, a ham and greens or cabbage is always a standing dish. At dinner, he drinks cider, toddy, punch; port, claret or Madeira.

"Having drank some few glasses of wine after dinner, he returns to his pallet, with his two blacks to fan

him, and continues to drink toddy or sangaree all the afternoon. He does not always drink tea. Between nine and ten in the evening he eats a light supper of milk and fruit, or wine, sugar and fruit, and almost immediately retires to bed for the night, in which, if he be not furnished with musquito curtains, he is generally so molested with the heat, and harassed and tormented with those pernicious insects, the musquitoes, that he receives very little refreshment from sleep."

Mr. Smyth exaggerates his tropical picture, evidently, and perhaps made, like the celebrated Mrs. Trollope, a mistake as to the comparative standing of the people with whom he generally associated. But with these deductions, we may gather from his description some idea of the times.

The intimacy of the Fairfaxes was in all respects particularly important to Washington, and for its solid benefit to his fortunes, and its shaping power over his manners, deserves to be counted among the providential preparations for what was to be required of him. His early training had certainly been of the homeliest sort. His father's landed possessions had brought work rather than money; his mother was the declared enemy of all superfluity, and she counted as superfluity whatever had no reference to business. The traditions of her neighborhood represent her as contemning the softer arts, and viewing with more than misgiving the mere graces of society. Her dutiful son, who resembled her in various respects, would, if he had remained

with her, have been more and more conformed to these leading ideas and feelings of hers, and the result would have been a most useful and high-minded being, quite as hard and angular for a man as Mrs. Mary Washington was for a woman.

But no! We have looked too long in the eye of many a portrait of him to believe this! He must have had his father's eyes and only his mother's mouth, with its expression of probity and resolution, and we need not believe that any process of mistaken training would or could have extinguished his taste or made him a mere utilitarian.

But the Fairfaxes undoubtedly did him great esthetic as well as other service. They were high-bred people, wealthy, and living in the exercise of a liberal hospitality, as well as in constant intercourse with the mother country, to whom alone we looked for social example before the Revolution. Lord Fairfax, besides the advantages resulting from his rank, was of University education, a man of the world, and, moreover, a thinker, an independent character, and remarkable for his sagacity and discernment. His nephew, William Fairfax, was rich, and held a high position in the colony. His seat of Belvoir continued for many years to be the resort of all that was to be had of well-bred and highly polished society. The family was altogether the first in the district where they lived, and one such family must do much toward raising the standard of manners and ideas in the neighborhood. They intermarried several

times with the Washingtons, and had done so in England, before either stock was transferred to America.

A young man must be dull indeed if the society of gentlemen and elegant women have no inspiration for him. Such a one was not George Washington, certainly. When we read his "Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation," we need not be assured that no grace of manner, refinement of expression or conversational improvement that came under his observation at Belvoir or Greenway Court passed without notice from him. He was notedly fond of ladies' society and ambitious to make himself agreeable to them; and if he, at this early stage in his career, imbibed, under these auspices, a certain formality of politeness, which the absorbing business in which he afterward engaged left him no time to amend, supposing that he saw models of any other,—we may be sure that in that style of manners which marks the gentleman, he could have had no better instructors than the Fairfaxes and their guests.

The formal manners of the period, among people of the highest stamp, are well exemplified in a letter from Washington to Mrs. Fairfax, written not exactly at the time of which we are treating, but only a little later, when Washington was twenty-three. The mingling of great respect, with a certain modest self-assertion is very characteristic, and gives us a high idea of both parties.

"FORT CUMBERLAND AT WILLS' CREEK, 7th of June, 1755.

"Dear Madam,—When I had the pleasure to see you last, you expressed a wish to be informed of my safe arrival at camp, with the charge that was intrusted to my care, but at the same time requested that it might be communicated in a letter to some friend of yours.

"Am I to consider the proposed mode of communication as a polite intimation of your wish to withdraw your correspondence? To a certain degree it has that appearance, for I have not been honored with a line from you since I parted from you at Belvoir. If this was your object, in what manner shall I apologize for my present disobedience; but on the contrary, if it was the effect of your delicacy, how easy it is to remove my suspicions, enliven dull hours, and make me happier than I am able to express, by honoring me with a correspondence you had given me hope of.

"Please to make my compliments to Miss Fairfax, and to Mr. Bryan Fairfax, to whom I shall have the pleasure of writing as soon as I hear he has returned from Westmoreland."

It is curious to note how considerable a portion of Washington's private correspondence is with ladies. We have known gentlemen who, on receiving a letter from a woman, even on business, would from sheer awkwardness reply by a verbal message, or employ a female friend to write the answer; but Washington

seems never, in a single instance, to have used any pen except his own in such cases. His voluntary correspondence with ladies to whom he was in no way bound except by friendship, was very large; in fact, one perceives that he must have been sometimes his wife's amanuensis and that he relished the duty. This does not bespeak the stern, rigid business machine which it has been the fashion to consider him, and we can imagine that few volumes would astonish the world more, than a complete collection of the letters of friendship written by Washington to ladies.

Our limits forbid the insertion of many specimens even of those which are accessible at this late day, but here is part of one written to Mrs. Fairfax in '55, which shows the tone of his more familiar letters:

"FORT CUMBERLAND, *14th May*, 1755.

"To MRS. FAIRFAX, BELVOIR.

"Dear Madam,—I have at last, with great pains and difficulty, discovered the reason why Mrs. Wardrope is a greater favorite with General Braddock than Mrs. Fairfax, and met with more respect at the late review in Alexandria.

"The cause I shall communicate, after rallying you for neglecting the means which produced the effect; and what do you think they were? Why nothing less, I assure you, than a present of delicious cake and potted woodcocks! which so affected the palate as to leave a deep impression on the hearts of all who tasted of them.

How then could the general do otherwise than admire, not only the charms, but the politeness of this lady?"

This is about as far as Washington ever permitted himself to go, in the way of fun, at least on paper, though he relished humor in other people. He probably felt more at ease in writing to ladies, because his letters to them had no business aim; and he liked their letters to him because they did not talk about business. It must have been a great relief to him to receive, occasionally, a communication purely friendly and social, and however over-occupied, harassed or vexed, this was one of the pleasures he never despised.

CHAPTER X.

Important epoch in life—Appointment as adjutant-general against the French—Called upon to go to the West Indies—Matter-of-fact observations there—Seized with small-pox—Washingtonian touch—Returns home—Succeeds to Mount Vernon on the death of his brother—Circumstances force him too early into affairs—Becomes a member of the Masonic fraternity.

The year 1751, when Washington was nineteen, was an important epoch in his life. Through the influence of his brother and other friends, he was appointed one of four adjutants-general for the State of Virginia, then much annoyed upon her frontiers by the Indian tribes, and not less by the encroachments of the French, who entertained the design of establishing themselves in various positions, from which they might take measures to extend their empire over the Western country. The appointment carried with it the rank of major, and the pay of one hundred and fifty pounds a year. Lawrence Washington had before held it, and would seem to have procured George's succession when his own health failed, which it did very early. The duty consisted in the assembling and training of militia, inspecting their arms and accoutrements, and enforcing the laws with respect to musters and discipline in general.

It was a post of no little responsibility, though calling for personal effort only at intervals, and it was certainly in no other instance bestowed on a youth under age. Falling in as it did with the bent of George's inclination, and bringing into exercise the knowledge of military tactics which he had taken great pleasure and pride in acquiring, it is no wonder he shone in the post, and very soon commended himself to the notice of the governor and council, who did not forget the infant major when more extensive operations were afterwards in contemplation. But for that year there was another duty waiting for Washington—a domestic one, which he seems to have fulfilled with a tenderness that speaks well for his character. His brother's illness becoming evidently consumptive, a voyage to the West Indies was proposed for him, and George was the companion of the journey. They sailed for Barbadoes, and reached there, after a five weeks' voyage, in September, 1751.

This was, so far as is known, Washington's only experience of being at sea. He kept a diary, of course, for that was his life-long practice; but alas! it contains no descriptive passages, no poetic dreaming, not even a lamentation over the dread sea-ail; only a transcript of each day's log, and his own observations upon the weather, and the change of wind.

He kept a journal at Barbadoes, also, but this is all matter of fact, too. But there is a characteristic trait about it that deserves to be noticed. He took the small-pox severely, and lay ill with it three weeks, but

amid all the minutiæ of the diary, he barely mentions this important fact in relation to himself.

But let us give a few extracts from this early journal:—

"November 4th, 1751.—This morning received a card from Major Clarke, welcoming us to Barbadoes, with an invitation to breakfast and dine with him. We went—myself with some reluctance, as the small-pox was in the family. We were received in the most kind and friendly manner by him. Mrs. Clarke was much indisposed, insomuch that we had not the pleasure of her company, but in her place officiated Miss Roberts, her niece, and an agreeable young lady. After drinking tea we were again invited to Mr. Carter's, and desired to make his house ours till we could provide lodgings agreeable to our wishes, which offer we accepted.

5th.—Early this morning came Dr. Hilary, an eminent physician, recommended by Major Clarke, to pass his opinion on my brother's disorder, which he did in a favorable light, giving great assurances that it was not so fixed but that a cure might be effectually made. In the cool of the evening we rode out, accompanied by Mr. Carter, to seek lodgings in the country, as the Doctor advised. We returned without accomplishing our intentions.

"10th.—We were genteelly received by Judge Maynard and his lady, and agreeably entertained by the company. They have a meeting every Saturday, this being Judge Maynard's day. After dinner there was the

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greatest collection of fruits set on the table, that I have yet seen—the granadilla, sapadilla, pomegranate, sweet orange, waterlemon, forbidden fruit, apples, guavas, &c. &c. We received invitations from every gentleman there. Mr. Warren desired Major Clarke to show us the way to his house. Mr. Hacket insisted on our coming Saturday next to his, it being his day to treat with beef-steak and tripe. But above all, the invitation of Mr. Maynard was most kind and friendly. He desired, and even insisted, as well as his lady, on our coming to spend some weeks with him, and promised nothing should be wanting to make our stay agreeable. My brother promised he would accept the invitation as soon as he should be a little disengaged from the doctor.

"15th.—Was treated with a ticket to see the play of *George Barnwell* acted. The character of Barnwell and several others were said to be well performed. There was music adapted and regularly conducted."

During his short stay on the island, he seems to have closely observed the manners of the inhabitants, and to have criticised with remarkable sagacity the modes of culture, economy and government.

"The Governor of Barbadoes," he says, "seems to keep a proper state, lives very retired and at little expense, and is a gentleman of good sense. * * * *By declining much familiarity, he is not over-zealously beloved.*"

This last is a truly Washingtonian observation,

though made so early. It breathes the very spirit of the writer's whole after-practice, so often complained of by those who would fain have been allowed familiarity with him. He obviously felt no disapprobation of the trait he thus noted, but rather concluded, we may presume, that by living retired, and not courting mere popularity or private adherency, the governor gained in dignity and safety what he lost in momentary praise and following.

Washington's never having courted private adherents has been sometimes cited as showing a reserved and unsocial temper; but to the careful student of his life it seems to have been rather the result of his self-devotion as a public man, and his utter distaste of every thing that savored of egotism. Most friendly in his friendships, he chose to choose his friends. He scorned to pretend personal liking for purposes of interest. He was studiously civil to all, however unwelcome, however disesteemed. He never wilfully offended any but those who began aggression, or whose want of worth or decency surprised him out of his inflexible propriety. But in no instance in the whole course of his immense correspondence, can an expression of personal liking be detected, unless addressed to known friends.

Every body he addressed must have known exactly the writer's estimation of him; and this was no way to gain partisans. He probably made enemies by this independent and manly course, but only of the bad, or

those whom he believed such. For these he seems always to have cared very little.

The journal goes on to say:—"There are several singular risings in the island, one above the other, so that scarcely any part is deprived of a beautiful prospect, both of sea and land; and, what is contrary to observations in other countries, each elevation is better than the next below. The earth in most parts is extremely rich, and as black as our richest marsh meadows. How wonderful that such people should be in debt, and not be able to indulge themselves in all the luxuries as well as necessaries of life. Yet so it happens. Estates are often alienated for debts. How persons coming to estates of two, three and four hundred acres (which are the largest) can want, is to me most wonderful. There are few who can be called middling people. They are very rich or very poor; for by a law of the island, every gentleman is obliged to keep a white person for every ten acres, capable of acting in the militia, and, consequently, the persons so kept cannot but be very poor. They are well disciplined and appointed to their several stations, so that in any alarm every man may be at his post in less than two hours."

These few extracts serve to show the unaffected and simple style in which Washington was thus early in the habit of recording his impressions—an example which, if well followed by all the young gentlemen of our day who travel the world over, would be better even than a Smithsonian Institute "for the advance-

ment of knowledge among men." The conscientious (not constitutional) moderation of Washington's expressions has often been remarked; only once in the course of this record of a visit to the tropics, by one who so loved the face of nature that he never remained in the city but at the call of duty, does a gleam of enthusiasm betray itself, when he says—"In the cool of the evening we rode out,—and were *perfectly enraptured* with the beautiful prospects which every side presented to our view—the fields of cane, corn, and fruit trees, &c., in a delightful green."

Perhaps the most characteristic part of the journal is that which relates to the small-pox, which, as we have seen, he dreaded to encounter in one of the hospitable families who had invited his brother and himself to visit them. He writes, about six weeks after that first entry—

"17th.—Was strongly attacked with the small-pox. Sent for Dr. Lanahan, whose attendance was very constant till my recovery and going out, which were not till Thursday, the 12th of December.

"December 12th.—Went to town and called on Major Clarke's family, who had kindly visited me in my illness, and contributed all they could, in sending me the necessaries the disorder required."

And this is all. The small-pox—a "strong" attack—and one which left on his noble face life-long marks of its power, is passed over as a small interlude, not worthy of being noticed in particulars, or calling for

the slightest expression of self-pity. Yet, throughout Washington's whole life, he is rather remarkable for the interest he takes in the health of his friends and servants. I have, by the kindness of Prof. G. W. Greene, a letter written by General Washington to General Greene, Jan. 22d, 1780, from head-quarters at Morristown, remonstrating very warmly on the subject of the discomfort suffered by his servants, for the want of additional quarters. "Nor is there at this moment," he writes, in that fine, bold, measured hand that he learned at Mr. Williams's school, "a place in which a servant can lodge with any degree of comfort —hardly one of them able to speak for the colds they have caught."

After Mr. Lawrence Washington was established in lodgings, under the care of a physician, his brother left him and returned home, to await the result of the experiment; but no benefit resulting to the invalid from his West Indian sojourn, it was arranged that his wife, under George's escort, should meet him at Bermuda, where a new attempt was to be made. But this did not take place, for all efforts gained not even a reprieve. The brothers never met again. The progress of the disease was so rapid, that nothing remained but a hurried return home, where death put a speedy termination to hopes and fears, and the elder brother, who had, since the father's death, been a second parent and worthy guide for George, was removed, on the 26th of July, 1752, at the early age of thirty-four.

This occurred at Mount Vernon, and Washington, who was evidently the main dependence and assistant in his brother's affairs throughout his illness, now took charge, by his brother's direction, of his business, and also of his family, consisting of his widow and one daughter, sickly from her birth. The widow married again, the daughter died, and the estate of Mount Vernon became, by Lawrence's will, the property of George Washington, and an inseparable appendage to that illustrious name for ever. He very soon took up his abode there, and commenced a system of improvements which he carried on, with various interruptions, for the rest of his life.

Thus it would seem that from a very early time, a premature manhood was forced upon him, by the circumstances of his life and the duties required of him. It is true these circumstances and duties evidently owe their force to his fitness, and from them we gather what manner of person he was. When other boys are apt to be "sowing their wild oats," he was quietly laying the foundation of fame and fortune. Too soon, we might say, of an ordinary mind in an ordinary body; for it is true, as a general rule, that the finest and most satisfactory development is slow. But in this case we can only study and wonder, and recognize the Divine hand.

On the 4th of November, 1752, at Fredericksburg Lodge, George Washington, then not quite twenty-one years of age, was initiated an apprentice in "the An-

cient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons." On the 3d of March, 1753, he was advanced to the second degree of fellow-craft; and on the 4th of August next after, he was made a Master Mason.

Afterwards, as the Grand Master of the Masons of the United States, he laid the corner-stone of the Capitol, at Washington; and, last of all, he was buried with Masonic honors, by the lodge of which he was the first Master. No wonder the Masonic order is proud to claim him, and to display the tokens of his membership which still remain.

He is thus referred to as a Mason, in a centennial oration delivered by Rev. Dr. Tyng, in 1852: "Never was our fundamental principle of justice more beautifully or perfectly realized by man. Every foot of his wall was built in rigid conformity to the square and the plummet. You may trace the principle in all his own private accounts. To be in debt was, in his judgment, to be in slavery, a slavery to which no Free Mason could be honorably subjected. For years his books were kept by his own hands, in the most beautiful style of neatness and punctuality. He maintained a perfect oversight of his own business, detecting any mismanagement or carelessness in others, and habitually choosing never to rely upon others to do that which he could do for himself. In his management of public trusts, during the whole eight years' campaigns of the Revolution, he kept an exact account of all expenditures in the public service, and exhibited them in his

own handwriting to Congress at the close of the war; not only refusing any remuneration for the services he had performed, but faithfully declaring himself largely a willing loser, in amounts of his own private funds, which had been expended in the public service. * * Nor was he less distinguished by one other great principle, Love, which wrought in beneficence to the needy, in forgiveness to the penitent, in the kindest and most liberal construction of the motives and characters of other men; in the strongest emotions of private friendship, and in the perfect toleration of the religious conscience of mankind."

CHAPTER XI.

Contemporary history—George II. and his court—Rudeness of manners—General corruption—Incorrect spelling—Swift—Pope—Bolingbroke—Chesterfield—Lady M. W. Montague—Burke—Pitt—Marlborough—Admiral Vernon—Duke of Cumberland—Flora Macdonald—C. J. Fox—George III.—Wolfe—Burns—Cowper—Continental European sovereigns.

Remembering how indistinct were my own juvenile ideas of contemporaneous history, I shall here turn aside to offer the younger part of my readers a few particulars of the time during which Washington lived, from his birth upward, in order that the impression made by his biography may be more clear, and the contrast between himself and some of his contemporaries more striking.

To begin with the monarch to whom he first owed allegiance. George the Second was in the fifth year of his long reign in February, 1732, when the greatest of his subjects was born.

This monarch was mean and profligate in his life and character, and the bad example of the sovereign was but too clearly reflected in the lives of the officers of the government and the higher nobility. A histo-

rian observes of that reign that "greatness of soul was a quality non-existent in court or cabinet." It was noticed as a wonderful piece of virtue, when a member of Parliament refused a bribe of a thousand pounds from the Prince of Wales. Such being the state of things at the fountain head of authority and honor, we may easily draw conclusions as to the general character of those who were sent out to rule the distant colonies. Corruption was at its most daring point, and an avaricious and unprincipled sovereign would like best the official who was most adroit in extorting money from those beneath him. The great Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who ruled England for thirty years, and who is said to have held the vile sentiment that "every man has his price," was at the height of his power. He was born in 1676, and died in 1745.

As to the tone of morals tolerated at the English court at the time, we may mention that a First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Berkeley, proposed to the King the secret removal of the Prince of Wales—a most infamous son, openly detested by both his father and mother—offering to send him away to America, "where he would never be heard of again."

As to manners, one of the young princesses, at a levée, purposely pulled the chair from under Lady Deloraine, who was about to sit down; and the lady, to avenge the insult, retorted it upon the king himself, by withdrawing his chair, and affording the court the spectacle of the monarch in the most awkward of all posi-

tions. This being the last extreme to which rudeness could be carried, the occurrence seems to have aroused some attention, and perhaps produced some amendment. The lady was banished from court, and we may hope the ill-bred princess received at least a private reproof for her misbehavior.

As to intelligence and information, the Duke of Newcastle said, "Certainly, Annapolis must be protected! Annapolis must be defended! By the bye, where is Annapolis?"*

Correct spelling was by no means universal in the reign of George II. Mr. Croker says that "nobody's was unexceptionable." Pope's, for instance, was often wrong.

Yet it was an age of distinguished writers. In 1726 Swift published Gulliver's Travels. He died in 1746. Pope, born in 1688, (which of course my readers recognise, as one of the marked dates in English history, the era of the revolution by which the Stuarts were expelled, in the person of James II.,) finished his translation of the Iliad in 1720. His Essay on Man was published in 1733, and the satirical poem called the Dunciad, was not completed until 1742. Pope died in 1744, when Washington was twelve years old. The poet Gay died in 1732.

The celebrated Lord Bolingbroke, a great writer

* The Annapolis then in question was not the capital of the State of Maryland, but a fortified place in Nova Scotia, the oldest European settlement in North America. It was to be defended against the French.

and orator, who had been implicated in the attempt to restore the exiled royal family, and who had been secretary to the Pretender, returned to England in 1735, and lived until 1751.

Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, particularly celebrated for the Letters to his Son, always referred to as containing a code of polite manners (though with quite too much of worldly motive intermixed to make it satisfactory as a guide for the young), was a particular favorite of George II., and held many offices of state during his reign. He was born in 1694, and lived until 1773. His letters are full of wit and satire, but Washington's simple "Rules for Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation," contain nearly all that is particularly valuable in them as an oracle of manners, with the addition of many important things which the great courtier entirely omitted, especially those which inculcate a religious reverence.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague was another very eminent letter-writer of that time, and has a still higher claim to be remembered, as having introduced into England the art of inoculation for the small-pox, since superseded by the safer operation of vaccination, but in her day one of the greatest benefactions to the world. Strange to say, the attempt was one which required courage and perseverance such as few women possess, so great was the opposition, not only of the vulgar, but of the medical profession. Lady Mary persisted in having the new mode, which she had learned in Tur-

key, while resident in that country, as wife of the English Ambassador, tried upon her own and only son; and she was obliged to watch the child herself, night and day, during the specified time, lest attempts should be made upon his life by those who desired to discredit inoculation.

This lady, noted as a beauty, a wit, and one of the most elegant writers of her time, died in 1762.

Edmund Burke was almost exactly, throughout, a contemporary of Washington. Born 1730, he died in 1797. He made a strenuous opposition in Parliament to the unjust treatment of the Colonies by Great Britain.

The first great William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, but long known as the "Great Commoner," was born in 1708, and was just beginning to be recognized as one of the master spirits of the age, when Washington was born. Mr. Pitt was the persistent enemy of Sir Robert Walpole, and his opposition to that wily minister was so powerful and efficient that the Duchess of Marlborough, who hated Walpole, bequeathed Pitt ten thousand pounds sterling as a mark of her gratitude. Pitt went on, steadily increasing in power and influence, holding many great offices of state, until the death of King George II., when he resigned his posts, retaining only his seat in the House of Commons. When discontents began to arise in the American Colonies, Mr. Pitt was too sagacious a man not to see that the spirit of this country was too much

like that of old England to bear very long with encroachments on constitutional liberty, and he took every opportunity to urge a conciliatory policy, and especially the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act. After he was made Earl of Chatham, he continued his wise advocacy of just and honorable treatment of the colonies, but found himself poorly supported in the House. Persevering to the last, he was, although in very feeble health, speaking with his usual energy on the subject, in the House of Lords, when he was seized with a fit, and being carried out insensible, soon after expired, May 11, 1778.

The great military hero, whose exploits were fresh in everybody's memory in Washington's early days, was John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, who died in 1722. He filled the same place in public esteem, so far as grand military successes go, as did the Duke of Wellington in our own times, though his victories cannot efface from the page of history the bad qualities by which his glory was stained—those of avarice and dishonesty. His principal victories were those of Liége, Blenheim, Ramillies and Malplaquet.

Admiral Vernon (after whom Mount Vernon was named) was the naval hero of the time, though the cooler judgment of a later day has not placed him in the rank claimed for him by those enthusiastic admirers who were under his personal influence. He has been designated as "a blustering and wrongheaded naval officer, whose rash though successful attack on Porto

Bello rendered him, for the time, the idol of the mob." He afterwards failed in an attempt on Carthagena, and another on Cuba. He was, for a while, the rival of the Duke of Cumberland in popular favor, but having afterwards committed the flagrant error of disclosing some secret instructions which he had received from the Admiralty, his name was ignominiously struck from the list of flag officers. He died in 1759.

The Duke of Cumberland, stigmatized by his opponents with the opprobrious title of "the Butcher," became prominent in the civil wars by which the Young Pretender was finally driven from the kingdom. The Rebellion broke out in 1745, under the motto—"A grave or a throne"—and a terrible and bloody struggle ensued. If on one side there was rashness and folly, on the other there was shocking brutality. One of the leaders is said to have taken a staff of executioners with him, and to have "conferred oftener with his hangmen than with his aides-de-camp." The Duke of Cumberland, though a cousin of the Pretender, was no whit behind in cruelty. The battle of Culloden—

Culloden, that reeks with the blood of the brave,

was the last act of the tragedy, and after it the "gentle Lochiel," the brave Clanranald, and other Highland chiefs, sealed their devotion with their blood.

The generous Flora Macdonald, who, at the risk of her life, assisted the youthful Charles at one stage of

his wild attempt, afterwards emigrated to this country, but returned to Scotland during our Revolutionary War. She died in the Isle of Skye, in 1790.

The celebrated statesman and orator, Charles James Fox, was born 1748, and was elected to Parliament before he was of age. In 1773 he adopted the American side in the controversy which then raged so hotly, and throughout the war was one of our most powerful friends in England. He died in 1806.

George III. came to the throne in 1760, when Washington was just married and established in life, one of his majesty's most loyal subjects. The year before 1759, saw the invasion of Canada, and the death of the gallant Wolfe.

It is worthy of notice, that mere bravery would not have left in the universal heart, the tender recollection which loves to dwell on the memory of this young officer. It is his reputation for all that is gentle and worthy in character, and for a literary taste which was not crushed even by the terrific circumstances of an impending battle. As he was rowed softly along under the walls of Quebec, in the shadow of the frowning ramparts, he was reading or repeating in a low voice to the officers, his companions, the verses of Gray's Elegy, just received from England. "There, gentlemen," he said, "I would rather be the author of that poem, than the conqueror of Canada!" Burns, and Cowper, and other poets loved to allude to him, and Wordsworth speaks of

The plain
Where breathed the gale that caught Wolfe's happiest sigh.

The mere soldier never excites either that kind or degree of interest.

Robert Burns was born 1750, and died at the early age of thirty-seven—leaving an imperishable name, for his songs are not shut up between book-covers, or kept for the accompaniment of the piano or harp, but familiar to the lips of the common people, and consecrated in their affections.

Cowper, as well known and almost equally beloved, was almost exactly contemporary with Washington. Born in 1731, he died in 1800.

As to other countries, the Empress Anne ruled Russia from 1733 to 1740—then Ivan—then Elizabeth —then Peter III.—and in 1762 Catharine II., noted for talent, but also for vices. She lived through the century.

Frederic II., better known as Frederick the Great, ascended the throne of Prussia in 1740. He was one of Washington's most ardent admirers in after years, and sent him a splendid sword, with the message (for there is no inscription), "from the oldest general in Europe to the greatest in the world."

Louis XV. was king of France from 1715 to 1774. Then came Louis XVI., who, with the sympathies of his queen, the beautiful Marie Antoinette, became our generous and efficient ally at the darkest period of the Revolution. The after fate of both is but too well known.

The popes through whose reigns Washington lived were Benedict XIV., Clement XIII., Clement XIV.

But I must not be tempted into further particulars. Enough has been touched upon to give some little note of the world's condition, at the time when our own most interesting events were occurring. We must now return to home scenes, and follow the youthful proprietor of Mount Vernon through a train of circumstances destined to prepare him for the part he was to sustain on the great stage of human affairs.

Englishman to trade beyond the mountains, under the pretence that all west of the Alleghanies belonged to the domain of their master.

The truth was that the French had begun the formation of that famous *cordon*, or line of military fortified posts, from Canada to the southern part of the Mississippi, which was intended to secure their ascendency in North America; and that they had managed to get very much the start of the not very warlike colonists, who, at a somewhat late hour, had begun to feel that both honor and interest required an immediate check upon such encroachments.

Both English and French had, before it came to this, made treaties with the Indians, sometimes with tribes rival or inimical to each other, sometimes with those whose only object was to obtain the largest possible amount of presents from both parties, whether for aid on the one hand or betrayal on the other. What the Indians in general thought of this contest between two great nations for the possession of their aboriginal hunting grounds, may be gathered from the shrewd question put by one of them to a gentleman on a tour of observation among them:—"Whereabouts do the Indian lands lie, since the French claim all the land on one side the Ohio River and the English all on the other?"

Indian alliances complicated the coming war a good deal, for messengers and reconnoitring parties were sure to fall in with plenty of red men, and it was often very

difficult to distinguish friend from foe, especially when both were found under the same ochre and feathers at different times, and this often at an interval of a few hours only. The business of traversing the woods was almost as hazardous as in the times of Tancred, when the trees could hear and talk. But Governor Dinwiddie had sagacity enough to know where to apply, after his first messenger failed; and Major George Washington required no second bidding to become his honor's commissioner for ascertaining the intentions of the savages in certain quarters, and—a still more delicate errand,—demanding of the French commandant by what authority and with what design he presumed to invade the dominions of His Majesty, King George the Second.

Here is the commission of the young major, only just "major" in the legal sense:—

"I, reposing especial trust and confidence in the ability, conduct and fidelity of you, the said George Washington, have appointed you my express messenger; and you are hereby authorized and empowered to proceed hence, with all convenient and possible dispatch, to that part or place on the river Ohio where the French have lately erected a fort or forts, or where the commandant of the French forces resides, in order to deliver my letter and message to him; and, after waiting not exceeding one week for an answer, you are to take leave, and return immediately back.

"To this commission I have set my hand, and caused

the great seal of this Dominion to be affixed, at the city of Williamsburg, the seat of my government, this 30th day of October, in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of His Majesty, King George the Second, King of Great Britain, &c., &c., Annoque Domini, 1753.

ROBERT DINWIDDIE."

"All his Majesty's subjects and all in amity or alliance with the crown of Great Britain," were also charged to further "George Washington, Esquire, commissioner under the great seal," and "to be aiding and assisting to the said George Washington and his attendants in his present passage to and from the river Ohio, as aforesaid."

The party consisted of eight persons;—Mr. Gist, the same who received from the Indians the posing question as to the ownership of the lands on either side the Ohio,—an experienced woodsman and valuable aid; John Davidson, an interpreter for the Indians; Jacob Van Braam, a Dutchman, who could speak French, which Washington himself unfortunately could not, and the major himself. Van Braam was the man from whom Washington had learned the art of fencing.

These, with four attendants, completed the chief's party, which set out from Williamsburg, on the 31st of October. It must have required some courage, and no little confidence in one's resources of health, strength and perseverance, to begin a journey of five hundred and sixty miles, on horseback, through woods and over

mountains, in the winter season, with the prospect of camping out nearly every night. There is a charming picture, by an American artist, of the party making their slow way through the woods in a heavy snow-storm, one of the most lifelike and rememberable of our home-landscapes.

It was a fortnight before the cavalcade reached Will's Creek, where the stream breaks through the Alleghanies with great rocky cliffs on either side, forming a scene of Alpine grandeur.

This was on the very confines of civilization, and here the party plunged into the pathless forests of the mountains, to encounter all the horrors of cold, fatigue, and savage ambush. "The inclemency of the season," says Mr. Sparks, "the Alleghanies covered with snow, and the valleys flooded with the swelling waters; the rough passages over the mountains, and the difficulties in crossing the streams by frail rafts, fording or swimming, were obstacles that could be overcome but slowly and with patience."

And by energy and patience they were overcome, and the young soldier found himself, on the twenty-fifth day after leaving Williamsburg, at Logstown, an Indian settlement, where his instructions required him to hold a conference with Tanacharison—known as the Half-King,—and other sachems of the Six Nations, and obtain from them guides and guards for the remainder of the journey, as well as all possible information as to the intentions of the French.

The Half-King's intelligence was that the French had already built several forts on the Mississippi and one on the Ohio; and when required to pilot the messenger's party to their quarters, he said that the nearest and most level road was now impassable, by reason of great marshes, at that season full of water. By the other road, it would take five or six "nights' sleep," to reach the nearest fort, where visitors must not count upon a very civil welcome.

He, the Half-King, had been received with great sternness by the commandant, and in reply to the abrupt question what his business was, had answered in a speech which, as recorded by the strictly veracious pen of Washington, presents as much dignity and good sense as ever novelist put into the mouth of the ideal red man,—a style of eloquence which may generally be classed as the millionth dilution of the Ossianic poetry.

For the sake of justice, we will quote a part of this Indian warrior's speech, which shows how much a man, however ignorant, gains by speaking only when he has something to say, and leaving off as soon as he has done.

"Fathers—I have come to tell you your own speeches, what your own mouths have declared. Fathers, you, in former days, set a silver basin before us, wherein was the leg of a beaver, and desired all the nations to come and eat of it, to eat in peace and plenty, and not to be churlish to one another; and that if any person should be found to be a disturber, I here

lay down by the edge of the dish a rod which you must scourge them with; and if your father should get foolish in my old days, I desire you may use it upon me as well as others.

"Now, Fathers, it is you who are the disturbers in this land, by coming and building your towns, and taking it away unknown to us and by force.

"Fathers, we kindled a fire a long time ago, at a place called Montreal, where we desired you to stay, and not to come and intrude upon our land. I now desire you may dispatch to that place, for, be it known to you, fathers, that this is our land and not yours.

"Fathers, I desire you may hear me with civilness; if not, we must handle that rod which was laid down for the use of the obstreperous. If you had come in a peaceable manner, like our brothers, the English, we would not have been against your trading with us as they do; but to come, fathers, and build houses on our land and take it by force, is what we cannot submit to.

"Fathers, both you and the English are white; we live in a country between; therefore the land belongs neither to the one nor to the other (of you.) But the Great Being above allowed it to be a place of residence for us; so, fathers, I desire you to withdraw, as I have done our brothers, the English, for I will keep you at arm's length. I lay this down as a trial for both, to see which will have the greatest regard to it, and that side we will stand by, and make equal sharers with us. Our brothers, the English, have heard this, and I come now

to tell it to you, for I am not afraid to discharge you off this land."

The French superintendent seems to have replied in a very truculent spirit, as reported by the Indian chief.

"Now, my child, I have heard your speech; you spoke first, but it is my turn to speak now. Where is my wampum, that you took away with the marks of towns upon it? This wampum I do not know, which you have discharged me off the land with; but you need not put yourself to the trouble of speaking, for I will not hear you. I am not afraid of flies or mosquitoes, for Indians are such as those. I tell you, down that river I will go, and build upon it, according to my command. If the river was blocked up, I have forces sufficient to burst it open, and tread under my feet all that should stand in opposition, together with their alliances, for my force is as the sand upon the sea shore. Therefore here is your wampum, I sling it at you.

"Child, you talk foolish; you say this land belongs to you, but there is not the black of my nail yours. I saw that land sooner than you did, before the Shannoahs and you were at war. Lead was the man who went down and took possession of that river. It is my land, and I will have it, let who will stand up and say against it. I will buy and sell with the English. If people will be ruled by me, they may expect kindness, but not else."*

* This must be understood to be the interpreter's translation of the

Mr. Sparks remarks here, that "the high-minded savage was not aware that, as far as he and his race were concerned, there was no difference between his professed friends and open enemies. He had never studied in the school of politics, which finds an excuse for rapacity and injustice in the law of nations, nor learned that it is the prerogative of civilization to prey upon the ignorant and defenceless."

On the 26th a council was held, and Washington in his turn made a speech, with the usual sprinkling of "Brothers," but stating candidly and succinctly the objects of his journey. The Half-King desired him not to be in a hurry, and suggested some reasons for delay; to which the envoy, after much argument and remonstrance, was obliged to yield, for fear of defeating the purpose of his mission.

"As I found it was impossible," he says, "to get off without affronting them in the most egregious manner, I consented to stay."

Three chiefs and one of the best of the hunters were at length appointed to compose the convoy, and on the 4th of December they arrived at Venango, an old Indian settlement at the mouth of French creek, on the Ohio, "without any thing remarkable happening," says Washington, "but a continued series of bad weather."

Here they fell in with Captain Joncaire, an interpreter, and one who had great influence with the In-

French officer's idioms into very homely English ones, for it is not likely that a gentleman would talk about the "black" of his nail.

dians. He assumed to be the commander of the Ohio, but recommended the young commissioner to carry his business to the general, who had his quarters at the near fort. At first the French at Venango were extremely civil, but when the wine began to go round, they verified the proverb* by telling much that they had intended to conceal: that it was their fixed design to take possession of the Ohio, and that they would do it, too; for although they knew the English could raise two men for their one, yet their motions were too slow and dilatory to prevent any undertaking of the French.

Captain Joncaire plied the Indians with liquor, and used every possible artifice to entice them to go no further. But, after much difficulty, the party was once more on the road, and, toiling three days longer, "through excessive rains, snows, and bad travelling through many mires and swamps," they at length reached the fort, and there found the French commander, a Knight of St. Louis, Legardeur de St. Pierre, a gentlemanly, keen old soldier. The fort was a considerable one, garrisoned at that time by about one hundred men and a large number of officers.

Washington was politely received, and soon delivered his message; and while the commandant and his officers were debating upon the requisitions of Governor Dinwiddie, Washington was reconnoitring in every direction, taking the dimensions of the fort, counting the canoes, etc.

* When wine is in, wit is out.

The latter amounted to about fifty, laid up in readiness to convey the forces down the river in the Spring. It was probably in contempt of what the English might do that the chevalier allowed these examinations to be made by an enemy. On Washington's inquiring of the Chevalier de St. Pierre by what authority he had made prisoners of several English subjects, he said that the country belonged to the French, and that he had orders to make prisoner every Englishman who attempted to trade on the waters of the Ohio.

The Sieur St. Pierre was profuse in expressions of civility; but it soon became evident that he did every thing in his power to separate the convoy from the party. Washington says, in his journal: "I cannot say that ever in my life I suffered so much anxiety as I did in this affair." His life had not been very long, but his manner of expressing himself was so habitually moderate, that we may imagine great perplexity from this. To leave the Half-King behind, was to give him and his followers over to the French interest, which was not to be thought of. Washington went to the general and remonstrated, was met with fair words and professions as usual, but could not get his Indians off, liquor being again put in requisition to incapacitate them for every thing but quarrelling or sleeping.

At length the Half-King, for shame's sake, put an end to the delay, and the party set out on their return, to travel one hundred and thirty miles in canoes, the horses, quite exhausted, having been sent off unloaded.

The travellers were destined to encounter new hardships in the new mode of exploring a wilderness. "Several times," writes the chief in his report, "we had like to have been dashed against rocks; and many times we were obliged, all hands, to get out, and remain in the water half an hour or more, getting over the shoals." Pleasant work for December! "At one place the ice had lodged, and made it impassable by water; we were therefore obliged to carry our canoe a quarter of a mile over. We did not reach Venango till the 22d, where we met with our horses."

The horses being nearly useless, from hard work and poor feeding, the cold increasing every day and the roads being blocked up by a heavy snow, Washington, anxious to get back and make his report to the governor, resolved upon attempting to perform the remainder of the journey on foot, accompanied only by Mr. Gist, the most experienced of the party, and leaving the baggage and effects in charge of Mr. Van Braam. With gun in hand, and the necessary papers and provisions in a pack strapped on his back, he set out, with a single companion, to thread the trackless forest, on the 26th of December, not without some misgivings, as we may well believe. On the second day the two travellers encountered a party of Indians in league with the French, evidently lying in wait for them. One of the savages fired at them, not fifteen paces off, and missed; but instead of returning the fire, which might have brought the whole pack upon them, they simply

took the fellow into custody, disarmed him, and kept him close till nine o'clock in the evening; then let him go, and, after making a fire to deceive the enemy, walked all night to get the start of whoever might attempt to follow. The next day they walked on until dark, and reached the river about two miles above the Fork of the Ohio, the ice driving down in great quantities.

Here it was that the incident of the whirling raft occurred, which had so nearly changed the fortunes of our first struggle for independence, if not the whole destiny of our country for an age or two at least. The journalist states the occurrence thus:

"There was no way for getting over but on a raft, which we set about with one poor hatchet, and finished just after sunsetting. This was one whole day's work. We next got it launched, then went on board of it and set off; but before we were half way over, we were jammed in the ice in such a manner that we expected every moment our raft to sink and ourselves to perish. I put out my setting pole to try to stop the raft, that the ice might pass by, when the rapidity of the stream threw it with such violence against the pole, that it jerked me out into ten feet water, but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the raft logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not get to either shore, but were obliged, as we were near an island, to quit our raft and make to it. The cold was so extremely severe that Mr. Gist had all his fingers and some of his toes frozen, and the water shut up so hard

that we found no difficulty in getting off the island on the ice in the morning."

We have seen several picturings of the scene on the raft, and one of Washington struggling in the icy water, but we should like to see one that would express the condition of the two half-frozen travellers on the island, through that terrible night, without tent or fire, and wrapped in the stiff, frozen clothes with which one of them, at least, must have come on shore. Not a word is said of this in the journal; of the horrors of cold, fatigue and hunger all at once; the long hours till morning, the reasonable dread of such savage dangers as had already been encountered. Well may Washington say this travel of eleven weeks had been "as fatiguing a journey as it is possible to conceive;" and he adds, "from the 1st day of December to the 15th, there was but one day on which it did not snow or rain incessantly; and throughout the whole journey we met with nothing but one continued series of cold, wet weather, which occasioned very uncomfortable lodgings, especially after we had quitted our tent, which was some screen from the inclemency of it."

Uncomfortable lodgings!

One amusing incident forms but a slender counterbalance to all this toil and suffering, yet we will quote it, to lighten our picture a little.

There was a certain Indian princess, called by the English settlers Queen Aliquippa, whose royal wigwam was placed somewhere near the route of the youthful

Washington's Visit to Queen Aliquippa.

commissioner. She being, like other petty sovereigns, exceedingly jealous as to her dignity, expressed herself highly offended that Major Washington with his suite should have passed her by, on his outward journey, without turning aside to pay his respects.

Hearing this, he resolved to make honorable amends on his return, and accordingly presented himself, worn and weary as he was, to assure her copper-colored majesty that no offence was intended.

But ladies of her class are not easily appeased by mere words, and we judge that in this case there must have been a remnant of displeasure lingering on the royal brow; for we learn that ere his peace was fully made, Major Washington had, with his usual gallantry, presented Queen Aliquippa with—not French gloves and Eau de Cologne, as some of our readers might suppose, but—his old watch-coat and a bottle of rum—"which latter," says Washington's journal, "was thought much the better present of the two." So tastes differ.

CHAPTER XIII.

Report to the Governor—Journal published in England—French and Indians more troublesome than ever—Supplies very slow—Colonel Washington rather indignant—Death of Jumonville—Misrepresentations respecting it—The mild and peaceful character of Washington's mind.

Reaching Williamsburg on the sixteenth of January, 1754, Major Washington made his report to Governor Dinwiddie, delivering also the letter of the French commandant. The council ordered the raising of two companies of men, by way of preparation for resisting the encroachments of the French, now perceived to be assuming a hostile attitude toward the colonists. Major Washington was at once appointed to the command of these troops, and by way of informing the people of the probable designs of the French, and exciting their indignation to the pitch of war, the Governor ordered the journal, from which we have quoted a few passages, to be published entire, much against the inclination of the writer, who thought very little of it. It was reprinted in England, and attracted much attention there. The Governor's orders to his young commander and his subordinates were, "to drive away, kill, and destroy,

or seize as prisoners, all persons not the subjects of the king of Great Britain, who should attempt to settle or take possession of the lands on the Ohio river, or any of its tributaries."

But the country in general was not particularly well-disposed toward the warlike manifestations planned by Governor Dinwiddie, who writes somewhat piteously to the Lords at home, "I am sorry to find them very much in a republican way of thinking." He persevered, however, and enlistments went on; the forces were increased, and demands for aid made on the neighboring colonies. Washington's experience in raising and equipping troops without money commenced here; he writes, from his head-quarters at Alexandria, to the Governor, that his men are much discouraged for want of pay, and that many of them are without shoes or stockings, some without shirts, and not a few without coats or waistcoats.

Washington was at this time raised to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, second in command under Colonel Fry, an excellent officer. Cannon and other military equipments, recently arrived from England, were sent to Alexandria, for the use of the growing army.

French aggressions on the Ohio precipitated hostilities somewhat. Some men who were building a fort, were attacked by a thousand French under Captain Contrecœur, and were forced to leave the ground, the French staying to complete the works, which they named Fort Duquesne, in compliment to the Governor

of Canada. Colonel Washington occupied an outpost, much exposed, and his force was quite insufficient for any serious resistance; but he lost not a moment in pushing forward into the wilderness, to clear and prepare a road—an effort which would at least give active business to his men, and keep off discontent and timidity.

To all hardships were superadded that of scanty fare, that least tolerable ill to a laborer. But the young chief thought there was "no such word as fail" for him, at least; and he tried to find an expeditious passage by the Youghiogany river, in the course of which he encountered rocks and shoals, and at length came to a fall, which rendered further exploration impracticable.

When he returned to the camp, he received a warning message from the Half-King, importing that the French were marching towards him, determined upon an attack. On further information of the near approach of the enemy, Washington set off to join the Half-King, a task of no small difficulty, as the march was to be performed in the night, in a violent storm of rain, and through an almost trackless wilderness.

That the state of affairs at this time was not wholly satisfactory, may be judged from the following passage in a letter addressed by Colonel Washington to the Governor:—"Giving up my commission is quite contrary to my intention. Nay, I ask it as a greater favor than any amongst the many I have received from your

Honor, to confirm it to me. But let me serve voluntarily; then I will, with the greatest pleasure in life, devote my services to the expedition, without any other reward than the satisfaction of serving my country; but to be slaving dangerously for the shadow of pay, through woods, rocks, and mountains—I would rather prefer the great toil of a daily laborer, and dig for a maintenance, provided I were reduced to the necessity, than serve upon such ignoble terms. * * * * I hope what I have said may not be taken amiss, for I really believe, were it as much in your power as it is in your inclination we should be treated as gentlemen and officers, and not have annexed to the most trifling pay that ever was given to English officers, the glorious allowance of soldier's diet,—a pound of pork, with bread in proportion, per day. Be the consequence what it will, I am determined not to leave the regiment, but to be among the last men that shall quit the Ohio."

A painful occurrence, at this stage of the border war, was the death of M. Jumonville, a French captain, who fell in an attack led by Washington himself, all the circumstances of which unhappy affair have been strangely misrepresented by the French historians. They assert that Jumonville advanced in the pacific character of a messenger. Washington observes—"*Thirty-six men* would almost have been a retinue for a princely ambassador instead of a *petit* * * * An ambassador has no need of spies; his char-

acter is always sacred. Since they had so good an intention, why should they remain two days within five miles of us, without giving me notice of the summons, or any thing that related to their embassy? * * * They pretend that they called to us as soon as we were discovered, which is absolutely false; for I was at the head of the party approaching them, and I can affirm that as soon as they saw us, they ran to their arms without calling, which I should have heard had they done so."

The short and simple account given by Washington to Governor Dinwiddie is this:—"I set out with forty men, before ten, and it was from that time till near sunrise before we reached the Indians' camp, having marched in small paths, through a heavy rain, and a night as dark as it is possible to conceive. We were frequently tumbling over one another, and often so lost that fifteen or twenty minutes' search would not find the path again.

"When we came to the Half-King, I counselled with him and got his assent to go hand in hand and strike the French. Accordingly he, Monacawacha, and a few other Indians, set out with us, and when we came to the place where the troops were, the Half-King sent two Indians to follow the tracks and discover their lodgment, which they did, at a very obscure place, surrounded with rocks. I thereupon, in conjunction with the Half-King and Monacawacha, formed a disposition to attack them on all sides, which we accordingly did, and after an en-

gagement of fifteen minutes, we killed ten, wounded one, and took twenty one prisoners. Amongst those killed, was M. Jumonville, the commander. The principal officers taken, are M. Drouillon and M. La Force, of whom your Honor has often heard me speak, as a bold, enterprising man, and a person of great subtlety and cunning. These officers pretend that they were coming on an embassy; but the absurdity of this pretext is too glaring, as you will see by the instructions and summons enclosed. Their instructions were to reconnoitre the country, roads, creeks and the like, as far as the Potomac, which they were about to do. These enterprising men were purposely chosen out to procure intelligence, which they were to send back by some brisk dispatches, *with the mention of the day that they were to serve the summons*, which could be with no other view than to get reënforcements to fall upon us immediately after."

History is really disgraced by the attempt to represent the death of the commander of such a party, under such circumstances, as an "assassination;" yet M. M. Flassan, Lacretelle, Montgaillard, and a recent writer in the "Biographie Universelle," are only a few of the French historians that have fallen into this gross error, the sole authority for which is a letter written by M. Contrecœur to the Marquis Duquesne, which letter gives the Governor the report of a Canadian who ran away at the beginning of the skirmish, and the rumors gathered among the Indians.

Not content with all this prosaic slander, M. Thomas wrote an epic entitled "*Jumonville*," the subject of which he states as "L'assassinat de M. Jumonville en Amerique, et la vengeance de ce meurtre," a poem which Zimmerman cites as a remarkable instance of the effect of national antipathy. The poet calls the occurrence "un monument de perfidie, qui doit indigner tous les siècles;" adding, "On doit employer tous les moyens pour en perpetuer le souvenir." The poem represents Jumonville as

> Ce heros unissant la valeur et les arts;
> Les palmes de Minerve et les lauriels de Mars.

"The preface," observes Mr. Sparks, "contains an exaggerated paraphrase of M. Contrecœur's letter, as the groundwork of the author's poetical fabric. With the materials thus furnished, and the machinery of the deep and wide forests, the savages, the demon of battles and the ghost of Jumonville, his epic speedily assumes a tragic garb, and the scenes of horror, and the cries of vengeance cease not till the poem closes."

Washington, with his usual self-abnegation in cases merely personal, never took the least pains to justify himself by declaring publicly the falsity of the stain thus sought to be fixed upon his character. He had the unqualified approbation of the authorities under whose orders he acted, and of the government at home, and he was content. Governor Dinwiddie wrote thus to Lord Albemarle:—"The prisoners said they were

come as an embassy from the fort; but your Lordship knows that ambassadors do not come with such an armed force, without a trumpet or any other sign of friendship; nor can it be thought they were on an embassy, by their staying so long reconnoitring our small camp; but more probably that they expected a reënforcement to cut us off."

Washington's private journal of the affairs of the time, which was lost at the fatal defeat of General Braddock, was many years after discovered in Paris, and found to confirm the statement given in his letter to his brother. So it is to be hoped future French historians will be content at least to reduce the depth of color which their predecessors have thought suitable to this event; and allow the death of M. Jumonville to assume its true aspect and position, as one of the legitimate horrors which follow in the train of war—horrors which Washington was never known either wilfully or carelessly to increase.

Let us again and again observe, in studying the career of Washington from the very beginning, how entirely he was a man of peace, though so large a portion of his life was passed in making war, and that with an iron will and unflinching thoroughness. He seems to have done his duty in the character of a soldier, just as coolly and advisedly as he did it in that of a surveyor. As soon as he knew his work, he set about it with all his powers of mind and body; but we never feel, for a moment, that war was the work he loved. He *loved*

rural life, the occupations of the farm, the sports of the field, the quiet enjoyments of the fireside. None of his tastes tended towards war.

Much has been said of his reserve, as if it had been *hauteur* or exclusiveness, bespeaking a certain ferocity, suited rather to military than to social life; but his letters and his constant home practice show conclusively that no man found society more necessary to his happiness, or more frequently confessed his need of friendship. He kept only his cares to himself; and those only when to impart them would have been injurious or unprofitable.

As he grew older, weighty business made him more grave and silent; but we should always carry with us, in attempting to appreciate his character as a man, the idea of him that we gather from the records of his earlier days; the kindliness, the sociability, the generous confidence, the courageous candor that marked him then, and evidently formed part of the very structure of his being. Whoever can read his journals and early letters without imbibing an affection as well as reverence for him, must have sat down to the task prepossessed by ideas derived from the received ideas respecting his later life.

In Washington's maturer years, the report of a fowling-piece was the only warlike sound that had any music for him, and as he grew older he loved the lowing of kine, the murmur of his trees, the crackling of a bright wood fire, and the laugh of children, better still.

Not a letter of his that contains any allusion to his private and personal tastes, but breathes the very spirit of a love of retirement and domestic repose. After he was President he said—"I can truly say I had rather be at Mount Vernon, with a friend or two about me, than to be attended, at the seat of government, by the officers of state, and the representatives of every power in Europe."

CHAPTER XIV.

Ill success at first—Surrender of Fort Necessity—French aggressions—Complaints—General Braddock's defeat and death.

THOROUGH as had been his preparation, and unsparing as he was in labors and sacrifices, Washington was by no means remarkably successful in his early warlike attempts. We cannot describe them as brilliant affairs, except as having given opportunity for the display of his prudence and courage, and the good conduct of those he commanded. He says of himself, in a letter to Mrs. Fairfax, 1755, "If an old proverb will apply to my case, I shall certainly close with a share of success, for surely no man ever made a worse beginning than I have." The difficulties under which he labored were too great. Then, as afterwards, it was too often his lot to be obliged to create the means by which he was to work, and imperfection and delay were the consequence. He never had, from first to last, enough or good enough men, horses, arms or other equipments of war. Perhaps if he had we might never have discov-

ered all his powers, for ample means eke out small abilities.

There was thus no dazzle of success to attract the attentions of Governor Dinwiddie, or the councils, or the public; yet Washington was again and again called upon—always called upon, when military business was to be done. Whether he succeeded or not, he was praised, and respected, and employed again; and whether he was paid or not, he still wished to be employed. His only concern seems to have been about his honor—that nothing should be done or consented to that would debase him in his own eyes or those of others, or especially any thing that would in the slightest degree tarnish his character and position as a gentleman. He was entirely defeated at Fort Necessity, in the centre of the Great Meadows, where the French attacked him, in a violent storm, at a time when his men were worn down with toil and travel. A more disastrous and mortifying accident for a young commander could hardly occur. His want of knowledge of the French language was here, as in many other cases, a great disadvantage to him. The articles of capitulation were translated miserably, and, as is proved, incorrectly, by Van Braam, in the rain, and by the light of an expiring candle; Washington, on the spot, and without time for deliberation, objecting to various items, which the French modified or omitted. The little detachment, helpless for the time, finally marched out of the fort, drums beating and colors flying; and Wash-

ington led the retreat through the wilderness, back to Will's Creek, where he left the remnant to recruit, forty-three wounded men being a part of the burthen, while twelve dead were left at the fort.

Under these circumstances, Colonel Washington and his officers received a vote of thanks from the Virginia House of Burgesses, who showed their sagacity in appreciating his services and abilities, without waiting for the sanction of success. The Half-king's conclusion was that "the French were cowards, the English fools." Washington he considered "a good man, but unwise," in not taking example by the Indians in the art of fighting. The Indian name for Washington was Connotaucarius, a name, Mr. Sparks tells us, referring to his official position, not to his personal qualities.

The French boasted immensely of their success at the Great Meadows, and not only indulged in self-glorification, but relaxed their vigilance, particularly at Fort Duquesne; which induced Governor Dinwiddie, who was ambitious in the military line, to plan an attack on that point. He applied at once to Washington, who discouraged him as far as he could; saying that without troops enough, and at that late season (the autumn of 1754), the thing could result only in a new defeat. The young soldier, just turned twenty-two, writes thus to Mr. William Fairfax, President of the Council:—

"I have orders to complete my regiment, and not a sixpence is sent for that purpose. Can it be imagined

that subjects fit for this service, who have been so much impressed with and alarmed at the want of provisions, which was a main objection to enlisting before, will more readily engage now, without money, than they did before with it? * * To show you the state of the regiment, I have sent you a Report, by which you will perceive what great deficiencies there are of men, arms, tents, kettles, screws (which was a fatal want before), bayonets, cartouch-boxes, and every thing else. Again, were our men ever so willing to go, for want of the proper necessaries of life they are now unable to do it. The chief part are almost naked, and scarcely a man has either *shoes, stockings, or a hat.* These things the merchants will not credit them for. The country has made no provision; they have not money themselves; and it cannot be expected that the officers will engage for them again, personally, having suffered greatly on this head already. * * There is not a man that has a blanket to secure him from cold or wet."

It is not to be wondered at that Washington became a miracle of care and forethought, when we see that at twenty-two it was already his duty to represent and argue upon these details. At sixty-eight he was still urgent on the same subjects.

Governor Dinwiddie was by no means well pleased with the objections made by Colonel Washington, not knowing enough of military matters to see the impracticability of projects so ill prepared for. He was an

arbitrary and wrong-headed man, claiming grand prerogative, and disposed to undervalue all obstacles which lay in the way of his favorite projects. So he privately wrote home to England, and procured the passage of a law by which the colonial officers were to be ranked as inferior to those of equal title, who should be sent out from the mother country, or "home," as England was then called. This was intended to bring to their senses Colonel Washington and other officers, whom the governor wished to compel to a more submissive course; but the very first thing Colonel Washington did, on the occasion, was to resign his commission. His services being fully recognized by all persons of judgment, Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, who had received from the king the commission of commander-in-chief of the forces intended to act against the French, in that quarter, wrote to him, entreating him to resume his position in the army. But this Washington wholly declined. "I choose," he says, "to submit to the loss of health, which I have already sustained (not to mention that of effects), and the fatigue I have undergone in our first efforts, rather than subject myself to the same inconveniences, and run the risk of a second disappointment."

General Braddock having come from England commander-in-chief of all the military forces in North America, and having been informed of Washington's qualifications and services, and the cause of his resignation, declared the young gentleman was quite right,

and forthwith invited him to become his aid-de-camp, or as the phrase is, one of his military family. This arrangement was intended to obviate the difficulty about rank, and Washington very soon concluded to accept the offer. He says:—"I must be ingenuous enough to confess that I am not a little biassed by selfish considerations. To explain—I wish earnestly to attain some knowledge in the military profession, and, believing a more favorable opportunity cannot offer, than to serve under an officer of General Braddock's abilities and experience, it does, you may reasonably suppose, not a little contribute to influence my choice."

General Braddock's experience, though of forty years' standing, had not been of a kind likely to be of much service to him in the wild border warfare of a new country, necessarily carried on in the most irregular and laborious manner, amidst swamps and wildernesses, over untracked mountains, and through bridgeless rivers. He had seen service only in the Guards, and under the Duke of Cumberland, noted more for his attention to mere technical punctilio, than for his sagacity or high soldiership. The general, like many other officers of his time, was rather a *roué* as to character, and having run his career in fashionable life, was disposed to adopt the fashionable idea, that the colonies and the colonists were a sort of inferior world, claiming very little respect, and only worthy of the least attention as a source of revenue to the "mother country." French encroachment on this poor territory must

of course be resisted, and the general cared but to vindicate British honor against the hereditary enemy, with very little idea of any value or dignity in the country to be defended, or the people who were humbly to fight under his orders. He and his troops were to be the heroes of the campaign, though a certain amount of brute force was to be levied among the uninstructed natives. Colonel Washington, young, handsome, brave, and connected with the "best families," he seems to have thought an exception to the general rule, and it is evident that, from the beginning, the general treated the defeated defender of Fort Necessity with instinctive respect, although he rejected with scorn the cautious advice prompted by past disasters. Washington writes thus to Mr. Fairfax, about General Braddock's hasty temper:—"The general, by frequent breaches of contracts, has lost all patience; and for want of that temperance and moderation which should be used by a man of sense upon these occasions, will, I fear, represent us in a light we little deserve; for, instead of blaming individuals, as he ought, he charges all his disappointments to public supineness, and looks upon the country, I believe, as void of honor and honesty. We have frequent disputes on this head, which are maintained with warmth on both sides; especially on his, who is incapable of arguing with or giving up any point he asserts, let it be ever so incompatible with reason or common sense."

Washington was living at Mount Vernon when

Braddock fixed his head-quarters at Alexandria; and the glitter and din of grand military preparations must almost have pierced his shades. All his military blood stirred at the thought of an expedition splendidly provided with all those things, for want of which he had in his former campaign suffered so severely. His mother begged him to stay at home and take care of his plantation, which had already felt and must still further feel the disadvantage of his absence; but he could not hear the grand new trumpet without a thrill and a forward impulse. Here he was going to see war indeed! Not the shabby, discouraging, inglorious war of men without hats and shoes, kettles and bayonets, but the military array of a young officer's brightest dreams—a host in gallant uniforms, with nodding plumes, the clang of inspiring music, and the dazzling splendor of banners flaunting in the sun. Victory was a thing of course. The want of proper equipment had occasioned defeat and mortification. The presence of every thing that a soldier's heart could wish or his fancy devise, was sure to bring triumph that would extinguish all memory of former failure. His mother, hearing of his intent of joining Braddock's expedition, flew to Mount Vernon to plead against it, but in vain. A severe fit of illness intervened, but nothing could turn him from his purpose.

He writes to Lieutenant Orme, General Braddock's aide-de-camp: "My fevers are very moderate, and, I hope, near terminating. Then I shall have nothing to

encounter but weakness, which is excessive, and the difficulty of getting to you arising therefrom. But this I would not miss doing before you reach Duquesne, for five hundred pounds. However, I have no doubt, now, of doing it, as I am moving on, and the general has given me his word of honor, in the most solemn manner, that it shall be effected."

He pushed forward in a covered wagon, and in spite of weakness managed to keep closely in the rear of the army, ready for the immediate use of his returning strength. He was often heard to observe, in after life, that the appearance of Braddock's troops, on the morning of the 9th of June, 1755, was the most splendid spectacle he had ever seen."

The actual result of all this promise and splendor is too well known to need recapitulation here, especially as I have resolved not to encumber and darken my pages with the hateful details of battle. In Mr. Irving's Life of Washington will be found the living picture of Braddock's defeat—a defeat which, without a doubt, might have been turned into a victory, if the English general had adopted the advice of the young Continental colonel, which he could hardly be expected to do, especially as he was by no means a wise and judicious man, although certainly a brave one. He paid for his error with his life, and is said, with his dying breath to have acknowledged to Washington his regret that he had not listened to prudent counsel. His remains were deposited at Fort Necessity, not far from

the spot on which Washington had been compelled to sign articles of capitulation only a year before.

Another failure for Washington! another cruel disappointment at the outset of life. But he never shone brighter than on that disastrous day. All that an almost frantic bravery could do to retrieve its fortunes, this man, whom we are accustomed to think of as immovable, and who was still at this time weak from the effects of fever, is reported to have tried. Two horses shot under him, and his coat well riddled with rifle balls, showed how he exposed himself to the enemy's sharp-shooters. His own account of the battle, written to his mother, lest she should hear exaggerated reports, and be alarmed, gives a frightful picture of his danger, and seems as if he was even then astonished at his wonderful escapes. A spectator says:—"I saw him take hold of a brass field-piece as if it had been a stick. He looked like a fury; he tore the sheet-lead from the touch-hole; he pulled with this and pushed with that, and wheeled it round like nothing. The powder-monkey rushed up with the fire, and then the cannon began to bark, and the Indians came down."

Nothing but disgrace and defeat was the result of this unhappy blunder of General Braddock, except to Washington, who, in that instance, as in many others, stood out individual and conspicuous, by qualities so much in advance of those of all the men with whom he acted, that no misfortune or failure ever caused him to be confounded with them, or included in the most

hasty general censure. It is most instructive as well as interesting to observe that his mind, never considered brilliant, was yet recognized from the beginning as almost infallible in its judgment, while his character, a tower of strength for the weak, commanded the respect even of the supercilious, and was ever a terror to the selfish, dishonest and cowardly.

CHAPTER XV.

Death of General Braddock—His estimate of Washington—Discontents—Exultation of the French—New appointments—Terrible alarm of the people—Emotion of Washington—Journey to Boston—Introduction to Miss Mary Philipse—Esteem in which Washington was held.

General Braddock, mortally wounded by one of the concealed enemies he despised, died three days after, a melancholy death.

Washington, who had been all action, first in the field, and afterwards in collecting the scattered forces and baggage, and conveying the wounded to a place of succor, read the funeral service over the unhappy commander, and saw him quietly interred, the usual military ceremonies being rendered impracticable by the near neighborhood of hostile Indians. His mention of General Braddock in letters of the time is very kind and generous. Before the battle he had commented severely upon the impetuosity and wrong-headedness, which he soon discovered in the officer whom he had expected to find a master in the art of war; but after these qualities had brought about their sad result; after the youthful aide-de-camp had seen the contemptuous

disregard of his own prudent and modest advice come to just what he expected, he had not a word of any thing but pity and condolence.

To the last, General Braddock honored him; and tradition says, that he even apologized, in his last moments, for a petulance of manner which, in the calm hours of approaching dissolution and the light of sad experience, he felt ashamed of. He left Washington his favorite horse, and recommended to his care his servant, Bishop, who never quitted his new master till death separated them. After all this was over, and the only surviving aide-de-camp had seen his wounded brother officers well cared for, he began to complain again of the feebleness which had been forgotten while all depended on his activity. He went as soon as he could to Mount Vernon, where he arrived July 20th, 1755, and there sat down to recruit his health, as well as to see after home affairs, which had suffered sadly during his absence. Mr. Jefferson says, "Every one knows how inevitably a Virginia estate goes to ruin when the owner is so far distant as to be unable to pay attention to it himself; and the more especially when the nature of his employment is of a character to abstract and alienate his mind from the knowledge necessary to good and even to saving management." Washington always felt this when he was long absent from home; and as he set out in life with the desire and determination to acquire an honorable independence, this disadvantage of absence annoyed him not a little, and we

find frequent allusions to it in his letters. Shortly after the last battle, he thus sums up his experience in a letter to his brother Augustin: "I was employed to go a journey in the winter, when I believe few men could have undertaken it, and what did I get by it? My expenses borne! I was then appointed, with trifling pay, to conduct a handful of men to the Ohio. What did I get by that? Why, after putting myself to a considerable expense, in equipping and providing necessaries for the campaign, I went out, was soundly beaten, and lost all! Came in, and had my commission taken from me; or, in other words, my command reduced, under pretence of an order from home. I then went out a volunteer with General Braddock, and lost all my horses, and many other things. But this being a voluntary act, I ought not to have mentioned it, nor would I have done it, were it not to show that I have been on the losing order ever since I entered the service, which is now nearly two years."

It would have been hard, then, to make him believe that defeat and loss were good things for him. He would have trusted himself with any amount of prosperity and success; but now that it is all over, every body can see how important was this early training of disappointment and humiliation. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." And there is reason to believe that Washington would have been in great danger of self-sufficiency, and a certain degree of arrogance, if success in these first undertakings had come in aid of

conscious merit and ability, to make him overrate himself. But these lessons, and the wise use he made of them, kept him, through life, nicely balanced between a sense of power, a consciousness of desert, on the one hand, and on the other, the modesty and self-distrust which always come to great minds from large experience. Impulses of duty and ability made him undertake greater and greater things, all his life through, but what he had learned by failure always preserved him from rashness, and even a too sanguine anticipation of results. He had ever in view the possibility of failure, and he was wont to provide for that failure as coolly and carefully as he planned the attempt, be it what it might.

The French and Indians were more insolent than ever after the astounding defeat of Braddock's large and well appointed force—a defeat as unexpected to the victors as to the poor general himself. That a British army of three thousand men should, by sheer folly and blundering, fall before a small scouting detachment composed of French and Indians, numbering not nine hundred in all, could hardly at first be understood or believed by either side. When De Contrecœur, who remained at Fort Duquesne, saw the small force he had sent out, under Captain De Beaujeu, merely to give a check to the enemy while he could deliberate upon abandoning the fort, returning in triumph with a long train of pack-horses laden with booty, the savages uncouthly clad in the garments of the slain,—grenadiers' caps, officers' gold-laced coats and glittering epaulettes,—

flourishing swords and sabres, or firing off muskets and uttering fiendish yells of victory*—he was bewildered, and for a while knew not what to think. But as soon as it became certain that a casualty had relieved him of his fears and frustrated the power of his enemies, his exultation knew no bounds. From this mortification of British pride, and the violent shock it gave to the opinion of British invincibility, he and his people augured complete and final triumph, and the accomplishment of all their ambitious designs.

But though the whole country was in consternation at the news of this terrible blow, it only roused all the more determined spirit of self-defence, and put to flight the languor or procrastination which had made the raising of the other troops and munitions difficult. Instead of leaving the matter carelessly in the hands of the authorities, the people themselves volunteered in companies, and demanded leaders and supplies which should enable them to march at once upon the intruders and their savage allies. They had suspected, at the outset, that the war against the French, in this country, was a mere fringe of that between the two powers on the other side of the water—a political affair in fact—and they cared little about it, except to get off as easily as possible. But now resistance became a matter of personal feeling. Friends and neighbors, as well as conspicuous men and gallant officers had been sacrificed, and the blood of the country was up, ready

* Irving.—Vol. 1. p. 207.

to avenge them, and to drive the enemy beyond the chance of further depredations. The Assembly met; Governor Dinwiddie required money; forty thousand pounds were voted, and orders were issued for raising a regiment of a thousand men. Washington was at once called for, and he as readily responded, so far as his willingness to serve the country was concerned. But this time he would do so on his own terms, and not on the humiliating and vexatious ones of the past; and demanded conditions to which the authorities were only too happy to accede. His mother implored him not again to expose himself to the dangers and losses of war and absence, and he wrote her, saying he would not serve unless a command were pressed upon him by the general voice of the country, nor even at that call, unless on terms so satisfactory that it would reflect dishonor on him to refuse, "and that, I am sure," he adds, "must and ought to give you greater uneasiness than my going in an honorable command." It was on the very day this letter was written that the appointment came, with such accompaniments as could not be objected to. He was constituted commander-in-chief of all the forces of the colony, and at the same time received, by vote of the Assembly, three hundred pounds, as some compensation for his recent losses, the other officers and privates of the Virginia companies receiving proportionate sums. The country rang with his praises, and even the pulpit could not withhold its tribute. The Reverend Samuel Davies hardly deserves the repu-

tation of a prophet for saying, in the course of a eulogy on the bravery of the Virginia troops—"As a remarkable instance of this, I may point out that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved, in so signal a manner, for some important service to his country."

Mr. Irving observes that the public confidence in Washington was the more creditable to the good sense of the legislature, inasmuch as Governor Dinwiddie was no great friend to Washington, who was rather too independent for him, and that he would much have preferred the advancement of Colonel James. It remains, Mr. Irving says, "an honorable testimony to Virginia intelligence, that the sterling, enduring, but undazzling qualities of Washington were thus early discerned and appreciated, though only heralded by misfortunes."

Washington fixed upon Winchester, the county town of Frederick County, Virginia, about one hundred and forty miles northwest of Richmond, as his head-quarters, and from this point he at once began to send out and collect what was requisite for a new campaign. He found the little place in the greatest confusion; the country people flocking in for protection, while the ablest inhabitants of the town were trying to get away from a spot which seemed likely to become a theatre of war or at least of alarm. It required incessant exertion on his part to obviate the disastrous effects of a general panic, and he writes to his friends in terms of the warmest indignation, at the cowardice of the people,

and their backwardness in attempting any thing rational for the defence of their families and property.

In the midst of all this, a terrible report was raised of Indians within a few miles of the place, burning and destroying all before them. Washington from the first discredited the rumor, and endeavored to concentrate the attention of the townspeople on the important work immediately before them; but new scouts coming in with new assertions of threatening danger, he at length sallied forth, at the head of about forty men—all he could possibly induce to accompany him—and marched to the scene of action. "When we came there," he says in a letter, "whom should we find occasioning all this disturbance, but three drunken soldiers of the light-horse, carousing, firing their pistols, and uttering the most unheard-of imprecations?" No wonder that Washington, now twenty-three years of age, was out of all patience at such weakness and folly in the very people on whom he had to depend for support and aid, in an expedition of the greatest importance to them all. He says, "the inhabitants are really frightened out of their senses."

He was doomed, throughout this recruiting and preparing period, to encounter all the evils of insubordination, inactivity, perverseness and disunion among the troops, with the further vexation of deficient support on the part of the government; while the real sufferings and dangers, and above all, the killing terrors of the inhabitants of the outer settlements, wrung his heart

with anguish. That heart which some have thought cold, was the heart of a man. Severe upon unworthy fears, he was full of sympathy for well founded ones. In one of his expostulatory letters to the timid and time-serving Governor Dinwiddie, his feelings burst their usual guarded bounds: "I am too little acquainted, sir, with pathetic language, to attempt a description of the people's distresses; but I have a generous soul, sensible of wrongs and swelling for redress. But what can I do? I see their situation, know their danger and participate in their sufferings, without having it in my power to give them further relief than uncertain promises. In short, I see inevitable destruction in so clear a light, that unless vigorous measures are taken by the Assembly, and speedy assistance sent from below, the poor inhabitants that are now in forts must unavoidably fall, while the remainder are flying before a barbarous foe. In fine, the melancholy situation of the people, the little prospect of assistance, the gross and scandalous abuse cast upon the officers in general, which reflects upon me in particular for suffering misconduct of such extraordinary kinds, and the distant prospect, if any, of gaining honor and reputation in the service, cause me to lament the hour that gave me a commission, and would induce me, at any other time than this of imminent danger, to resign, without one hesitating moment, a command from which I never expect to reap either honor or benefit; but, on the contrary, have almost an absolute certainty of incurring displeasure be-

low, while the murder of helpless families may be laid to my account here. The supplicating tears of the women and moving petitions of the men melt me into such deadly sorrow, that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

Some difficult questions of subordination arising in the course of the confused and obstructed preparations for a new campaign, it was decided to refer to the judgment of Colonel Shirley, at that time (1756) commander-in-chief of his Majesty's forces in North America, and Washington was appointed emissary in the case. For this purpose he made a journey to Boston—five hundred miles on horseback in the depth of winter,—visiting the principal cities on the way, and acquiring information and making acquaintances which proved useful to him ever after. General Shirley decided the point in question favorably to Washington's views, and after an agreeable visit at Boston, the young commander returned to New York.

Here he was entertained for the second time at Mr. Beverly Robinson's, and became acquainted with the young lady who has derived no little celebrity from the fact that she awakened, in the anxious and busy heart of the young soldier, some new care, of a softer kind than that which attended the management of refractory recruits. Miss Mary Philipse, sister of Mrs. Robinson, was a handsome and sprightly girl, a great

Washington surrounded by the Distressed Inhabitants of the Borders.

belle in her day, and a worthy and accomplished woman always. Washington, who had by this time, doubtless, lost in the stir of war all tender recollection of the "Lowland beauty" spoken of at an earlier date, seems at once to have struck his flag before this new invader, whose power was very probably increased by the circumstances of the moment. After the annoyance, the rough life, the constant and severe duty of a recruiting tour in a state of alarm, the quiet, the elegance, the softening atmosphere, of a New York drawing-room, must have given the young lady great advantages. Washington fancied this fair flower transplanted to Mount Vernon, and carrying with her the charming refinement, the genial air in which he found her. No wonder the fascination took effect. But somebody else —another officer—had indulged the same dream, and somewhat in advance of the Virginia colonel. Washington could not remain to try his fortunes in a prolonged contest. Captain Morris, one of General Braddock's aides, and wounded in the miserable battle of the Monongahela, stationed in New York, and not now called away by duty, kept his ground, and the result was that in due time Miss Philipse became Mrs. Morris, while another lady,—no less celebrated for personal charms as well as those of fortune and position,—was reserved for the future of Washington.

The difficulties of his position in Virginia must, however, soon have driven all tender thoughts from his mind for the time. He was goaded and discouraged to

such an extent that he even had thoughts of again resigning his commission. Some anonymous person, or probably some one who was nettled at Washington's just reproaches, had circulated tales reflecting upon his honor and fidelity, laying the blame of the recruiting difficulties upon him, instead of on the authorities of the colony and the people themselves. But the friends of the young chief soon argued him out of a resolve too impetuous to be wise. Mr. Carter says—"Rather let Braddock's bed be your aim, than any thing that might discolor those laurels which I promise myself are kept in store for you." Colonel Fairfax says—"Your good health and fortune are the toast of every table. Among the Romans, such a general acclamation and public regard, shown to any of the chieftains, were always esteemed a high honor, and gratefully accepted." (The Romans had not yet gone out of fashion, in those days.) Mr. Robinson, Speaker of the House of Burgesses, a personal friend, wrote—"Our hopes, dear George, are all fixed on you, for bringing our affairs to a happy issue. Consider of what fatal consequence to your country your resigning your commission at this time may be; more especially as there is no doubt most of the officers would follow your example." Certainly the youthful hero stood in need of a misfortune now and then, to counteract the effect of so much praise. In the present state of affairs, however, surrounded by difficulties, goaded by the distress of the inhabitants, and, in the midst of all his trials and anxieties, occasionally se-

verely reprimanded by the Governor,—who did not find him submissive enough, and who winced under his persevering remonstrances,—he had just enough to preserve him from the danger of vainglory. All these, with undue exposures and irregular ways of life, with many fatigues and trials, ended in a fit of illness, which confined him at Mount Vernon for four months. The very letters that Washington wrote during the period of these harassing duties, would have been sufficient to furnish full and diligent occupation to any other man but himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

Active people apt to be low-spirited when they are ill—Health brings enterprise—Adoption of the hunting-shirt—Difference of opinion on road-making—Vexatious delays—Benefits of experience—More remonstrances—Resignation.

WASHINGTON, like a good many other very active people, was always rather low-spirited when he was ill, prognosticating an unhappy result, and chafing under the necessary confinement.

The four months' illness of 1757 annoyed him terribly. He wrote to his friend, Col. Stanwix:—

"My constitution is much impaired, and nothing can retrieve it but the greatest care, and the most circumspect course of life. This being the case, as I have now no prospect left of preferment in the military way, and despair of rendering that immediate service which my country may require from the person commanding its troops, I have thoughts of quitting my command and retiring from all public business, leaving my post to be filled by some other person more capable of the task, and who may, perhaps, have his endeavors crowned with better success than mine have been."

He thinks he is in danger of an "approaching decay," and that he is "visited with several symptoms of such a disease."

He had before this set off for Williamsburg, but found himself unable to proceed, his fever and pain being much increased by the effort. After a while, however, he began to feel somewhat recruited, and with the return of a tolerable state of health, the old impulse came back upon him in full force, and he again joined the army, now preparing for a well-concerted expedition for the final reduction of Fort Duquesne. He was again appointed commander-in-chief of the Virginia troops, which formed one half of the force prepared for this service. Colonel Byrd commanded the other regiment.

Delays, unavoidable in the condition of the colony, at that time caused a good deal of irregularity and dissatisfaction, and all Washington's abilities, civil as well as military, were required to harmonize and put in order the unruly citizen-soldiers.

One of his expedients of economy was the adoption of the Indian dress for men and officers. "Nothing but the uncertainty of obtaining the general approbation," he says, "causes me to hesitate a moment to leave my regimentals at this place, and proceed as light as any Indian in the woods. It is an unbecoming dress, I own; but convenience rather than show, I think, should be consulted." Mr. Irving observes that this movement of Washington's was the origin of the pres-

ent rifleman's dress. Dress was ever a matter of importance with Washington. He did not pretend to despise it or think it beneath a wise man's notice. In those days there were much greater distinctions and choice in dress than at present; rank and breeding were expressed to a certain degree by the costume, and Washington evidently thought the impression a gentleman makes and the respect he attracts, largely dependent on his taste in dress. If he had ever quoted Shakspeare, he would have echoed, for the benefit of his young friends, the advice of old Polonius—

> Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
> But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
> For the apparel oft proclaims the man.

Even when the advantage of the service was in question, it evidently cost him some little sacrifice to set aside personal appearance, and come down to the unsuperfluous casing of the Indian.

There was a warm debate about the road to be taken by the army in approaching Fort Duquesne. Colonel Bouquet wanted to make a new road as they went along, but this Washington argued would probably delay the march to so late a season of the year, as might frustrate the plan entirely. He considered the road made with so much toil and cost by General Braddock's army, the only one really practicable under the circumstances, and he left no effort or argument untried to carry this, which he thought so important a point.

"If Colonel Bouquet succeeds on this point with the general, all is lost—all is lost; indeed our enterprise is ruined, and we shall be stopped at the Laurel Hills this winter; but not to gather *laurels*, except of the kind that covers the mountains."

He could not prevail, however; and as usual when counsels dictated by his knowledge and experience were slighted, those concerned had reason to repent it. Six weeks were expended in making a road of forty-five miles, time enough for the whole force, an army of six thousand men, to have reached Fort Duquesne, by the road already made; when it was ascertained that at that time the French and Indians at the fort were not more than eight hundred. Washington wrote very warmly about this. "Behold how the golden opportunity has been lost, perhaps never more to be regained!" But after the attempt at road-making had turned out just as had been predicted, the general, Forbes, feeling that he had made a mistake, now called the young Virginia colonel to his counsels, and compensated by the deference which he paid to Washington's opinions, for the slight way in which he had at first been disposed to pass them by. It was evidently very hard for these high-toned British officers to believe that so young a man was a safe counsellor. In Braddock's day Washington was twenty-three; at the time of the new expedition he was but twenty-six; and young gentlemen of that age are not usually much reverenced by gray-beards. Washington, however, was

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destined to be an exception to general rules in this respect.

Much as he had been opposed to General Forbes's plan, he was far above the littleness of attempting to thwart it in order to gain credit for himself, at the expense of the general. As soon as he found the thing determined against his views, he fell to work as heartily as if he thought the plan the wisest in the world, and only asked for himself and his men to be put in the foremost of the breach and attack.

"If any argument is needed to obtain this favor," he says, "I hope without vanity I may be allowed to say that, from long intimacy with these woods, and frequent scouting in them, my men are at least as well acquainted with all the passes and difficulties, as any troops that will be employed."

This request was granted, and we have full particulars of the difficulties of the march, and of the young commander's care and skill in getting through them. When the forces reached Fort Duquesne they found it abandoned, and, as far as possible, burnt to the ground, the French having declined awaiting the attack of so formidable an army. All the five months' preparation had so delayed the expedition, that the enemy had had ample time to concert these measures, and to save themselves from loss. The weary and half-naked Virginia regiment reached the fort over paths where the bones of their neighbors and friends lay whitening, unburied, since the defeat of Braddock's army, their num-

bers increased by the sad relics of a recent imprudent attempt of Colonel Grant, for the particulars of which we must refer the reader to Mr. Sparks or Mr. Irving.

General Forbes being ill, Washington wrote, informing the Governor of Virginia of the state of things, congratulating him and the country on the reduction of the long disputed post, and at the same time pleading earnestly for a supply of clothing and other necessaries for his men, part of whom were to be left behind to garrison the remains of the fort.

"Considering their present circumstances," he writes, "I would by no means have consented to leave any part of them there, had not the general given me express orders. * * * By their present nakedness, the advanced season, and the inconceivable fatigues of an uncommonly long and laborious campaign, they are rendered totally incapable of any sort of service; and sickness, death and desertion must, if they are not speedily supplied, greatly reduce their numbers. To replace them with equally good men will, perhaps, be found impossible."

Washington was always the friend of his men. He never forgot their comfort or their interest. He never ceased insisting on their rights, whether of pay or proper accommodations, and they repaid him with corresponding respect and devotion.

At the end of this campaign, when he had been about five years in active service, he wanted to resign his commission and return home to see after his private

affairs, and prepare for domestic life. On this occasion his officers wrote him an eloquent and most enthusiastic letter, which enumerates all the qualities that go to the making of a good commander, not omitting unyielding discipline, and ascribes all of them to the colonel of twenty-six. In closing, they add—"But if we must be so unhappy as to part, if the exigencies of your affairs force you to abandon us, we beg it, as a last request, that you will recommend some person most capable to command, whose military knowledge, whose honor, whose conduct and whose disinterested principles we may depend on." And, "we beg to assure you that as you have hitherto been the actuating soul of our whole corps, we shall at all times pay the most invariable regard to your will and pleasure, and will always be happy to demonstrate by our actions, with how much respect and esteem we are," &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

A new acquaintance and new interest—A fair lady with a fair fortune—Marriage and housekeeping—Handsome compliment and natural embarrassment—View of plantation-life and its requirements—Fashions of the day—Rural life not exempt from them.

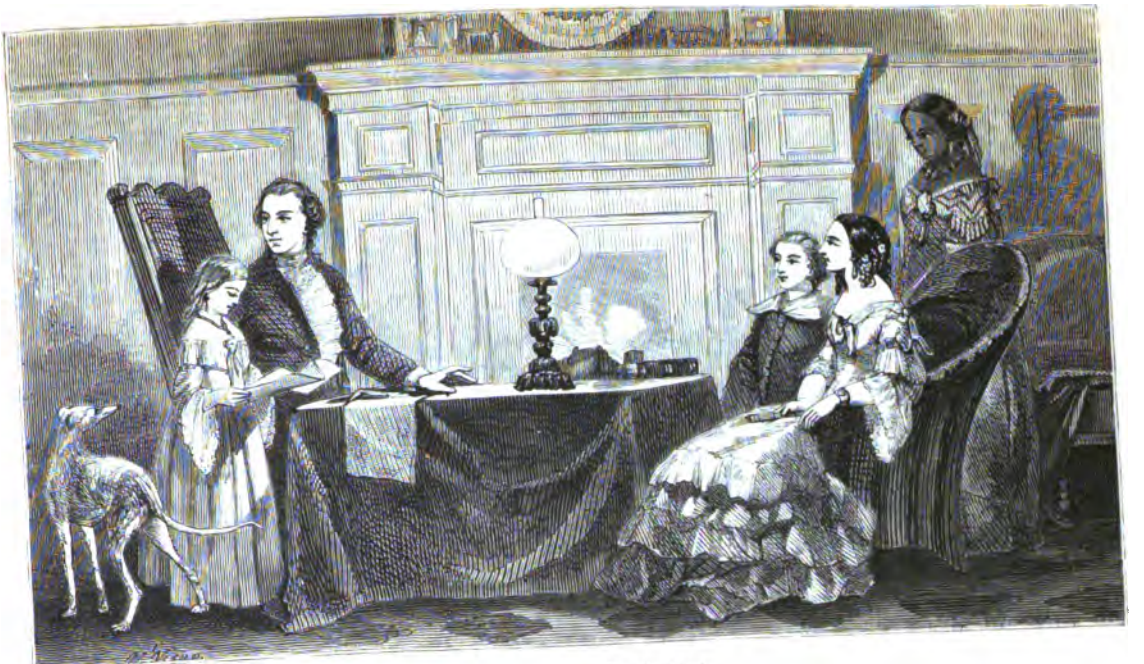
While Washington was travelling in the course of the expedition to Fort Duquesne, he was introduced, at the house of Mr. Chamberlayne, a planter on York River, to the lady who not long afterward became his wife.

Mrs. Martha Custis was the widow of a gentleman of fortune, who had died about two years before, leaving her with two children and a large estate, of which she was sole guardian and executrix. She was very handsome, and seems to have been considered quite a prize for Washington, who was at that time by no means rich. They were married on the 6th of January, 1759, when Washington was twenty-seven years of age, and Mrs. Custis about the same age or perhaps a few months older; and after three months spent at the White House, a country seat on York River, they took up their abode at Mount Vernon, and commenced housekeeping in true Virginia style, with a large number of slaves, a

wide tract of little cultivated land, and a custom of almost boundless hospitality. Nobody foresaw, then, what intense interest was to gather about that newly formed household. There was youth and beauty, and wealth and social distinction—an honorable fame belonging to the husband, to the wife a reputation for beauty, riches and virtue. All that the world has to give was there, plain to the eyes of the most careless observer. And the young couple settled down into regular plantation life, as if they had been the commonest people in the world—giving dinners and dining out; attending balls at Alexandria, and court at Williamsburg, seeing to the negroes, who gave them just as much trouble as slaves always give their owners, and keeping up a correspondence with every twentieth cousin, with a faithfulness hardly credible in our overoccupied days.

But who would not give gold to have seen Colonel and Mrs. Washington in that heyday of life and hope, full of interest and energy, in the very prime of strength and beauty? Washington six feet three,* and of a presence that had already begun to strike men with surprise and admiration, as it did afterwards with awe; his wife a small, plump figure, full of sprightliness and feminine grace, fond of gayety, and not insensible to her many advantages; proud of her husband and making her duty to him the law of her life, yet loving her own way too, and claiming the privileges of her sex and

* Sparks' Life.—p. 110.



Washington in the Family Circle.

circumstances. Who would not love to have seen them?

It was in these palmy days that a handsome compliment was planned for the bridegroom—no less than public thanks for past services, to be expressed *viva voce*, in the Virginia House of Burgesses, by the mouth of a friend, Mr. Robinson, the Speaker. Colonel Washington, a newly elected member, was about to take his seat in the House for the first time, when his attention was called to what was about to proceed from the Chair. All eyes were fixed on himself, he was addressed by name, his services were succinctly enumerated, the gratitude of the country was painted in glowing terms, and then came an awful pause—a silence which was to be broken by an acknowledgment of the honor on the part of the recipient.

But this was not the field on which Washington felt at home. Never fluent, and now perfectly overcome by embarrassment, he tried to speak, but the words died on his lips. "Mr. Speaker," he said; "Mr. Speaker"—and then he stopped. Robinson, who knew him well, and loved him, saw at once what the case was. "Sit down, Mr. Washington," said he, and added with a happy readiness—"Sit down, sir; your modesty equals your valor, and that surpasses any power of language that I possess."

This traditional anecdote is one of the most significant of all that we possess. It is indeed the voucher

for the general correctness of many others less fully authenticated.

As we have no direct testimony to the kind of life led by the young couple at Mount Vernon—nothing beyond what is traditionally known of plantation-life at that period, or may be gathered in general from letters of the day, we shall take the liberty of using some of the private papers which we find in that precious box, with a description of which we commenced our little history. Trifles are sometimes acceptable as furnishing significant accessories to a picture.

We have before observed that Washington, with all his supposed stoicism, was by no means indifferent to dress. Infinitely small as was certain provision of this sort which he made for attending court at Fredericksburg, in 1747,—as we have seen,* there is yet a gravity in the enumeration of shirts and "Hoes" which bespeaks a little interest in those respectable articles of costume. In 1757, there has been a large step towards the adonizing that young men are generally prone enough to. An order upon a London merchant—Mr. Richard Washington, but apparently not a relative within traceable distance,—includes a large quantity of "Irish Linnens,"—for so Washington spelt the word all his days;—"1 piece Finest Cambric; 2 pr. fine worked ruffles at 20*s.* pr. pair; 2 setts compleat shoe brushes; ½ doz. pr. Thread Hose at 5*s.*; 1 compleat saddle and bridle, and 1 sett Holster caps, and Housing of fine

* Page 82.

Blew cloth with a small edging of Embroidery round them, &c." And "if worked ruffles should be out of fashion," the London merchant "is desired to send such as are not." After this, comes "As much of the best superfine blew Cotton Velvet as will make a Coat, Waistcoat and Breeches, for a Tall Man, with a fine silk Button to suit it, and all other necessary trimmings and linings, together with garters for the Breeches." "Six pairs of the very neatest shoes, viz: 2 pr. double channelled pumps; two pr. turned ditto, and two pair stitched shoes; to be made by one Didsbury, over Col. Beiler's last; but to be a little wider over the instep;" and afterwards, "6 pr. gloves, 3 pairs of which to be proper for riding, and to have slit tops; the whole larger than y^e^ middle size."

Of the same date we have a characteristic little letter about furniture at Mount Vernon, when the young bachelor was evidently thinking of a possible lady, or he could hardly have been so particular:

"*Sept.* 1757.

"To Mr. Richard Washington, London.

"Dear Sir,—Be pleased over and above what I wrote for in a letter of the 13th of April, to send me 1 doz. strong chairs, of about 15 shillings a piece—the bottoms to be exactly made by the enclosed dimensions, and of three different colors, to suit the paper of three of the bed-chambers, also wrote for in my last. I must acquaint you, Sir, with the reason of this request. I have

one dozen chairs that were made in the country; neat, but too weak for common sitting. I therefore propose to take the bottoms out of those and put them into these now ordered, while the bottoms which you send will do for the former and furnish the chambers. For this reason the Workmen must be very exact, neither making the bottoms larger nor smaller than the dimensions, otherwise the change can't be made. Be kind enough to give directions that these chairs, equally with the others and the Tables, be carefully packed and stowed. Without this caution they are liable to infinite damage.

"G. W."

But in 1759, we come to some new matters:

"A sammon-colored Tabby," (not cat but velvet,) "of y^e. enclosed pattern, with Sattin flowers; to be made in a sack and coat. 1 Cap, hkf. and Tucker and Ruffles, to be made of Brussells lace or Point, proper to be worn with the above negligée; to cost £20.

"2 fine flowered lawn aprons.

"2 prs. women's white silk hose.

"6 pr. fine cotton do.

"4 pr. thread do., four threaded.

"1 pr. black and 1 pr. white sattin shoes of the smallest fives.

"4 pr. Callimanco do.

"1 fashionable Hatt or Bonnet.

"6 pr. women's best kid gloves.

"6 pr. ditto mitts.

"½ doz. Knots and Breast-knots.

"1 doz. round silk laces," (stay-laces.)

"1 black mask," (which ladies of the time used to ride in.)

"1 doz. most fashionable cambric pocket hkfs.

"2 pr. neat small scissors.

"Real Miniken pins and hair pins, and 6 lbs. perfumed powder. 3 lbs. best Scotch snuff.

"3 lbs. best violette Strasburg," (snuff too.)

"1 ps. narrow white sattin ribbon, pearl edge."

Besides curious evidence as to the fashions of the day, the voluminous orders of which we give but a specimen, show also what were the habits of Colonel and Mrs. Washington and their family, at Mount Vernon. Only people who visited a good deal and entertained in proportion, could need so great a variety of handsome things from England every year.

In writing for the finery of the ladies of the family Washington evidently took the names of the different articles from viva voce communication and wrote them down as he could best guess at the spelling. As "6 yds. Jackeynot muslin"—"1 pr. Corded Dimothy,"—(a farmer being more familiar with Timothy than with Dimity)—"a garnet whoop,"—meaning a hoop ring, or one set all round with the stones;—"Pinns,"—"Jarr Raisons,"—"Callimanca,"—"Calamanca,"—"Calamanco,"—"Philigree shoe buckles."—(We think we see him with Mrs. Washington standing by, giving the items as he writes.)

"A puckered petticoat of a fashionable color.

"A silver Tabby petticoat.

"2 handsome breast flowers.

"Hair-pins—sugar candy.

"2 pr. small silver earrings for servants.

"Miniken pins, Masks, bonnets, bibs, tuckers, aprons, pack-thread stays—a Sett of china for a little miss—a Book of newest and best Songs, set to music for the Spinnet."

The word "fashionable" occurs many, perhaps hundreds of times in these invoices. And the impression left on the reader's mind is that of a rather gay and dressy family, visiting and seeing company in the best style of the day, and unwilling to be behindhand in any thing that related to personal appearance or domestic accommodation. It is because these seeming trifles do assist in forming an estimate of Washington's condition, character and tastes at that period, that I have thought it worth while to cite these specimens of the annual invoice.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Quiet life—Training for the future—Country habits—Hunting and surveying—Boundless hospitality—Dancing school—Sick neighbors—Small-pox among the negroes—The bread-and-butter ball—Exact calculations.

WASHINGTON was now to enjoy a long season of repose in private life, in the calm prosperity of a happy marriage, in the rural sports and labors that he loved, and in the exercise of all the duties of master, neighbor and citizen. This long, uneventful period will afford us leisure to be a little discursive and desultory, touching here and there upon what may seem characteristic or interesting, without much regard to chronology or consistency of narrative.

It is often asked, How did Washington occupy himself, during the fifteen years of almost seclusion which followed his marriage and his retirement from the army?

Perhaps an extract from his note-book—the diary of one month's doings, recorded by his own hand—will give as concise and significant an answer to this question as any that could be devised.

DIARY.

"Jan. 1, 1770. At home alone.

"2. At home all day. Mr. Peake dined here.

"3. At home all day, alone.

"4. Went a hunting with John Custis and Lund Washington. Started a deer, and then a fox, but got neither.

"5. Went to Muddy Hole and Dogue Run. Carried the dogs with me, but found nothing. Mr. Warner Washington and Mr. Thurston came in the evening.

"6. The two Col. Fairfaxes dined here, and Mr. R. Alexander and the two gentlemen that came the day before. The Belvoir family (Fairfaxes) returned after dinner.

"7. Mr. Washington and Mr. Thurston went to Belvoir.

"8. Went a hunting with Mr. Alexander, J. Custis and Lund Washington. Killed a fox, (a dog one,) after three hours' chase.

"Mr. Alexander went away, and Mr. Thurston came in the afternoon.

"9. Went a ducking, but got nothing, the creek and rivers being froze. Robert Adam dined here and returned.

"10. Mr. Washington and Mr. Thurston set off home. I went hunting on the Neck, and visited the plantation there, and killed a fox after treeing it 3 times, and chasing it about 3 hours.

"11. At home all day alone.

"12. Ditto, ditto.

"13. Dined at Belvoir with Mrs. Washington and Mr. and Miss Custis, and returned afterwards.

"14. At home all day alone.

"15. Went up to Alexandria, expecting court, but there was none.

"16. Rid to the Mill, Dogue Run and Muddy Hole.

"17. At home all day alone.

"18. Went to the plantation in the Neck.

"19. At home all day alone.

"20. Went a hunting with Jackey Custis, and catched a fox, after three hours' chase. Found it in the creek.

"21. At home all day alone.

"22. Rid to Posey's barn and the Mill.

"23. Went a hunting after breakfast, and found a fox at Muddy Hole and killed her, after a chase of better than two hours, and after treeing her twice, the last of which times she fell dead out of the tree, after being there several minutes apparently well. Mr. Temple and Mr. Robert Adam dined here.

"24. At home all day alone.

"25. Ditto, ditto.

"26. Ditto, ditto.

"27. Went a hunting, and after tracking a fox a good while, the dogs raised a deer and ran out of the Neck with it, and did not, some of them at least, come home till the next day.

"28. At home all day, and in the afternoon Mr. Temple came here.

"29. Dined at Belvoir with J. P. Custis, and returned in the afternoon.

"30. Went a hunting, and having found a deer, it ran to the head of the Neck, before we could stop the dogs.

"Mr. Peake dined here.

"31. At home all alone."

So ends the diary of one winter month.

Other entries run thus:—

"Jan. 1. Fox hunting in my own Neck, with Mr. Robert Alexander and Mr. Colvill—catched nothing. Captain Posey with us."

This occupation fills seven of the days of the same month and nine in February, all of which are given an account of, with a list of the company, and often some other details, as how particular dogs acquitted themselves.

"Jan. 23. Directed paths to be cut for fox hunting."

"Jan. 24. Surveyed some lines of my Mount Vernon tract of land."

This seems to have been kept up faithfully, as it is frequently met with, as for instance on the 11th, which was passed "running some lines between me and Mr. William Triplet;" and on the 21st, "Surveyed the water courses of my Mount Vernon tract of land—taking advantage of the ice;" and on Feb. 26, "Laid off a

road from Mount Vernon to the *lain* by Mr. Marley's," which no doubt is there to this day.

' Jan. 4. Rid to Muddy Hole, Dogue Run and Mill plantation."

These names are repeated a thousand times in the journals, and will be, one of these days, restored to their localities and made classic. So goes on the journal through the month, "Nulla dies sine linea," even if it be only to say "At home alone," or, as is more common, to give a list of visitors, of which there is no lack.

"Jackey Custis returned to Mr. Boucher's to school. In the evening Sally Carlisle and Betsey Dalton came here.

"Went up to court; returned in the evening, and found my brothers, Sam. and John, with the latter's wife and daughter; Mr. Lawrence Washington and daughter, and the Rev. Mr. Smith here. At home all day with the above company."

Five days afterwards comes the entry, somewhat piteous, we fancy,

"My brothers, and the company that came with them, still here.

"April 18. Patcy Custis and Milly Posey went to Colonel Mason's to the dancing school."

A neighbor being ill, we find frequent entries.— "Went to see Mr. Peake." "Mrs. Washington and I went to see Mr. Peake." "Rid to Mr. Peake's with Mrs. Washington," and so on every day or two. The

amount as well as frequency of visitors at Mount Vernon is appalling.

April 9th, when there are already four or five guests staying, we read :—

"Mr. Christian danced here, who, besides his scholars and those already mentioned to be here, Mr. Peake and niece, Mr. Massey, Mrs. Piper and Mr. Adams, dined here."

The next day :—

"10. Mr. Christian and some of his scholars went away this afternoon.

"11. The rest of the scholars went away after breakfast."

The dancing school goes on—and we generally find "Mr. Christian and his scholars" staying two or three days. Then they all go, "except Peggy Massey," and ten days afterwards we find—

"At home all day alone, except Miss Massey, who is still here, and Mr. Temple, who came just after dinner, and went away just after dinner was got for him.

"July 30, 1770. After our early dinner, (which Mr. Peake took with us,) we set off for Fredericksburg, that is, Mrs. Washington, P. Custis and myself, and reached Mr. Lawson's to tea.

"31. Got to my mother's to dinner, and staid there all night.

"Aug. 1. Dined at my mother's, went over to Fredericksburg, and returned in the evening back again."

(The following ten days divided between family visits and public business.)

"Sept. 3. Went in the evening a fishing with my brothers Sam. and Charles.

"Dec. 30. My miller and his wife and Mr. Bell dined here."

One thing is certain—that the wise and good man did not seclude himself, or seek safety for his virtue or dignity in avoiding close and frequent contact with his fellow-creatures. He felt human life to be the noblest of all schools, and that we may learn something of every body, whether great or humble. His fortune, connections, and acknowledged merit, gave him access to the best society of the day, and one part of the business of his life was, then and always, conversation, with men of eminence, with men of affairs, with elegant and thoughtful women, and with intelligent persons of all classes.

To cultivate society was quite as prominent an object with him, as to attend to his plantation or manage his lands. One and the other were things to be done, and he did them as well as he could.

In those early days, when to live at Mount Vernon, dispensing hospitality and doing all the service he was able to his friends and the public, was his highest aim, we neither know nor see any thing of the reserve which marked him later in life. He partook of whatever amusement offered, and if, from what we know of his character as a whole, we may suspect that he did

great plenty of bread and butter, some biscuits, with tea and coffee, which the drinkers of could not distinguish from hot water sweetened. Be it remembered that pocket-handkerchiefs served the purposes of table-cloths and napkins, and that no apologies were made for either. I shall therefore distinguish this ball by the style and title of the bread-and-butter ball. The proprietors of this ball were Messrs. Carlyle, Laurie and Robert Wilson; but the Doctor, not getting it conducted agreeably to his own taste, would claim no share of the merit of it."

In making these extracts, no attempt at exact chronology has been made, the object being merely to show what were Washington's home habits. They varied but little until the commencement of the Revolution.

It requires no great enthusiasm or imagination to see in this unstudied picture a man of the most decided domestic tastes, the most neighborly habits, and the most generous hospitality. Sympathy with his kind breathes from every page of the journals he kept for so many years. No idea of separating himself or resting retired in fancied superiority, can be detected any where. Dignity never interferes with service or attention to the humblest. It is evident that the reputation which Washington had acquired in the wars never cast its shadow between him and his neighbors. They never thought of it, probably, and we should judge, by his devotion to farming affairs, that he too had forgotten the glow of military ardor which inspired his efforts and

nerved him for the sacrifice of those trying days. To do well what he did at all was so invariably his rule, that even the difficulties of Virginia farming could not deter him from incessant efforts at improvement; and his failures only show how little aid he could have drawn from the experiments or the sympathetic action of his neighbors. So far as we can discover, he was almost alone in his attempts at scientific agriculture; and though he was always giving aid and encouragement to the planters about him, no one, apparently, thought it necessary to join him in experiments or to contribute information gleaned from distant sources. We judge thus, because every new idea for the improvement of farming is carefully noted, and hardly one is to be found in the journals. Washington made a point of seeking intelligence from abroad, and, to the last day of his life, in spite of all cares of war and state, his interest in the subject never flagged. To make the earth productive, to see it bring forth "grass and herb after his kind," and "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food," was one of the great objects of his life, one that was as dear to him while he was head of the new empire, as before he was called from his beloved shades, and from the business to which he had meant to devote his life, to encounter toil and danger in the wider and grander form of service which his country required.

Rural life, in its minutest details, was certainly his chosen object of interest. The journals show that no

operation on the farm, no improvements in its roads and fences, no care of its stock, no calculation of its profits was beneath his notice. There is a curious instance of this in the diary of February, 1760. "5th, Visited my plantations, and found, to my great surprise, Stephens constant at work. Grig and Lucy nothing better. Passing by my carpenters, that were hewing, I found that four of them, viz., George, Tom, Mike, and young Billy, had only hewed one hundred and twenty feet yesterday from ten o'clock. Sat down, therefore, and observed Tom and Mike, in a less space than thirty minutes, clear the bushes from about a poplar stock, line it ten feet long, and hew each his side twelve inches deep. Then letting them proceed their own way, they spent twenty-five minutes more in getting the cross-cut saw, standing to consider what to do, sawing the stock off in two places, putting it on the blocks for hewing it square, and lining it. From this time till they had finished the stock entirely, required twenty minutes more; so that in the space of one hour and a quarter, they each of them, from the stump, finished twenty feet of hewing; from hence it appears very clear, that, allowing that they work only from sun to sun, and require two hours at breakfast, they ought to yield each his one hundred and twenty-five feet, while the days are at their present length, and more in proportion as they increase. While this was doing, George and Billy sawed thirty feet of plank, so that it appears, that making the same allowance as before (but not for the

time required in piling the stock), they ought to saw one hundred and eighty feet of plank. It is to be observed, that this hewing and sawing likewise were of poplar; what may be the difference, therefore, between the working of this wood and other, some future observations must make known." And again :—

"April 4th.—Apprehending the herrings were come, hauled the seine, but caught only a few of them, though a good many of other sorts of fish."

"8th.—Seven o'clock, a messenger came to inform me that my mill was in great danger of being destroyed. I immediately hurried off all hands with shovels, &c., to its assistance, and got there myself just time enough to give it a reprieve for this time, by wheeling gravel into the place which the water had washed. While I was there a very heavy thunder-shower came on, which lasted upwards of an hour. I tried what time the mill required to grind a bushel of corn, and to my surprise found it was within five minutes of an hour. Old Anthony attributed this to the low head of water, but whether it was so or not I cannot say. The works are all decayed, and out of order, which I rather take to be the cause. This bushel of corn, when ground, measured near a peck more of meal."

CHAPTER XIX.

Washington a domestic man—Attention to his step-children—Lists for England—Mrs. Washington a doting mother—Washington strict but not severe—Generally beloved—Always doing service—Death of Miss Custis and Washington's emotion—Difficulties of Virginia housekeeping and farming—Two temperance sermons.

It is quite amusing to contrast the character of Washington, as displayed in his private journals, with the stony figure sometimes considered to represent him fitly. A more active and genial master of a family, than he appears at home, cannot be found, or one more interested in the smallest details of domestic life; taking upon himself all kinds of vexatious business for other people, and sparing no pains, and avoiding no application, when aid was to be afforded, difficulties settled, or evil or waste prevented. When his friends desired articles from England, whence came every thing handsome and "genteel" in those days, this man, whom we have been used to think fitted only for a pedestal, was the medium of communication, and enters into all the necessary minutiæ with a patience evidently habitual. We have had a small specimen of how he makes out lists for the use of his own family, and all the invoices

together show an enormous amount or number of articles required. Perhaps it is only because he was obliged to send at stated intervals, twice a year or so, for things we can buy every day, that the list seems so extravagant. Certain it is that the aggregate of what is needed for a wealthy family never seemed so large or the list so varied.

We see something of the fashions in the following double list, dated Oct. 1761, copied verbatim et literatim from the Washington MS., where it is signed with his name, as is almost every memorandum or list of the kind in the whole mass of papers. Probably one thousand "autographs," technically so called, might be found there.

October —, 1761.

"*Invoice of sundry's to be shipped by Robert Cary, Esq. & Co., for the use of Master John, and Miss Patcy Custis—each to be charged to their own accounts, but both consigned to George Washington, Potomack River, &c.*

"FOR MASTER CUSTIS, 8 YEARS OLD:

"1 handsome suit of winter cloaths.
"A suit of summer Ditto, very light.
"2 Pieces Nankeens with trimmings.
"1 silver laced Hatt.
"6 pair fine Cotton Stockings
"4 pair fine Worsted Ditto

"4 pair strong Shoes

"4 pair neat Pumps

"1 pair gloves

"2 hair-bags

"1 piece Ribbon for Ditto

"1 pr. Silver Shoe and knee buckles.

"1 pair Sleeve buttons

"A small Bible neatly bound in Turkey, and John Parke Custis wrote in gilt letters on the inside of the cover.

"A neat small Prayer Book bound as above, with John Parke Custis as above.

"1 Piece of Irish linen at 1s.

"3 prs. shoes for a boy 14 y'rs. old.

"3 p'r. coarse stockings for Do.

"2 p'r. Woman's strong shoes size 8.

"2 p'r Stockings for Do.

"50 Ells Oznabrigs

"A suit of Livery Cloaths for the above boy of 14. A hat for Do.

"NOTE.—Let the Livery be suited to the arms of the Custis family.

"MISS CUSTIS, 6 YEARS OLD.

"A Coat made of fashionable Silk.

"A fashionable Cap or Fillet with bib apron.

"Ruffles and Tucker—to be laced.

"4 fashionable dresses to be made of Long Lawn.

"2 fine cambric frocks.

"A sattin Capuchin hat and neckatees.

"A Persian quilted Coat.

"1 p'r. pack-thread Stays.

"4 p'r. Callimanco Shoes, 6 p'r. leather ditto and

"2 p'r. Sattin Do. with flat ties.

"6 p'r. fine Cotton Stockings. 4 p'r. White Wors'd Do.

"12 pr. Mitts. 6 p'r. Gloves—white kid.

"1 pr. Silver Shoe Buckles.

"1 pr. neat Sleeve Buttons.

"6 handsome Egrets different sorts.

"6 y'ds. Ribbon Do. 1 pr. little scissors.

"3 M* large pins, 3 M short whites.

"3 M Minikens

"1 Fashionable dressed Doll, to cost a guinea; 1 Do. at 5s.

"A Box Gingerbread. Toys & Sug'r Images and Comfits.

"A neat, small Bible, bound in Turkey and Martha Parke Custis wrote on the inside in gilt letters.

"A small Prayer Book neat and in the same manner.

"12 y'ds. coarse green Callimanco.

"The above things to be put into a Strong Trunk—separate from J. P. Custis's, whose will likewise be put into a Trunk, each having their names.

"1 very good Spinet—to be made by Mr. Plinius,

* M for a thousand.

2 1 2

Harpsichord maker, in South Audley street, Grosvenor square.

"NOTE.—It is beg'd as a favor that Mr. Cary would bespeak this instrument as for himself or a friend, and not let it be known y^{t} it is intended for exportation.

"Send a good assortment of spare strings to it.

"Books according to the enclosed List—to be charged equally to both John Parke Custis and Martha Parke Custis—likewise one Rheam of writing paper.

"G^{o}. WASHINGTON.

"*October* 12th, 1761."

The young Custises were heirs to a large fortune, and were brought up accordingly.

Mrs. Washington was very indulgent to them; and her husband having no family of his own, fully adopted the children of his wife, and acted the part of guardian, as he did every thing else, with scrupulous fidelity. He occasionally reminds his business correspondent, when writing for articles for the children, that their accounts must be accurately and separately kept, "for," says he, "I must give in my accounts to the General Court every year." His diary shows how attentive and kind he was to them; and their unbounded reverence and that of their children for him, gives evidence of his faithfulness. Mr. G. W. P. Custis, son of the Master Jacky, mentioned in these early records, and adopted son of Washington, says, "he had tears for the aberrations of his wards." His kindly interest in them kept

pace with their years, and was never interrupted by any stress of public affairs.

Mrs. Washington was a doting mother, and in no instance can an expression of impatience or want of sympathy on the part of Washington be detected, though he had a great deal of care and trouble in the education and settling of the children. That they feared him is very certain, yet they feared only his displeasure, not his unkindness. How could such a judge not be feared, by any heart of ordinary sensibility? His strictness with regard to others was so backed by a still greater strictness in reference to himself, that there was no appeal, no loophole for retreat, no turning upon him his own weapons, even in thought.

He says, in a letter about the conduct of his overseers, speaking of a bad example having been set— "Whenever this is the case, it is not easy for a man to throw the first stone, for fear of having it returned to him;" and throughout his whole life, which was necessarily one of command, of advice, of judgment, of examination and reproof, he bore in mind this pregnant truth, and this made every word of his fly like an arrow to the heart of wrong-doers—a quality by no means calculated to make him immediately popular, although it has been said again and again, on the best authority, that "there was perhaps never any man so much beloved." His personal influence was unbounded, and such is never the result of qualities that inspire chiefly fear; for there is something too noble in human

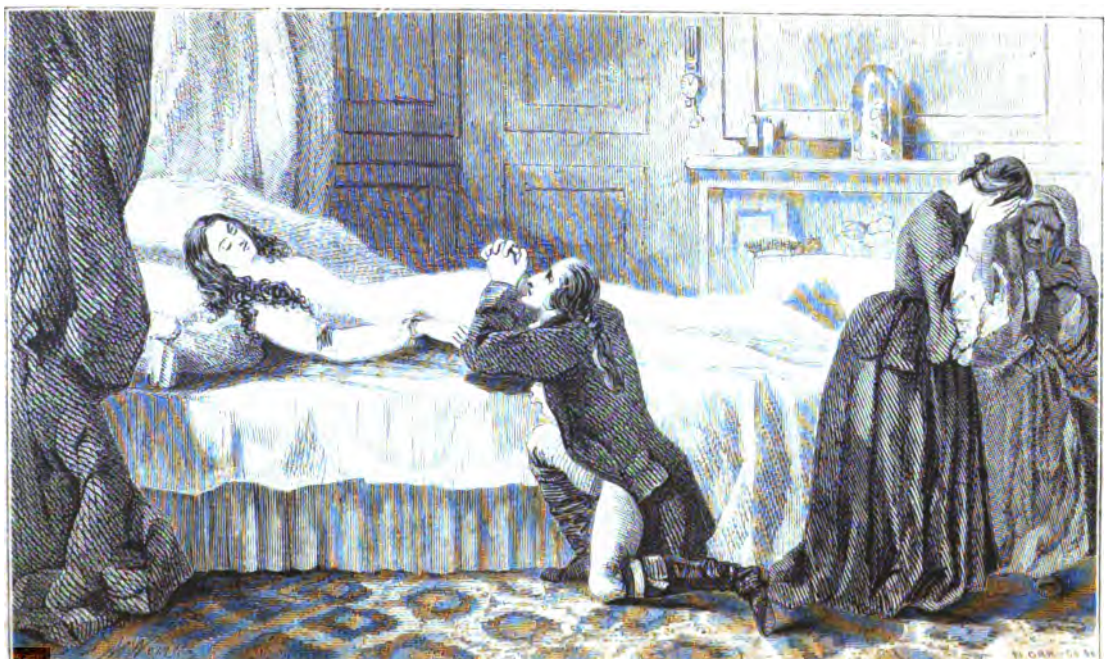
nature to yield its hearty homage to what merely intimidates. "Perfect love casteth out fear;" those who thoroughly understood and appreciated Washington loved him intensely, and he warmly and faithfully reciprocated affection. He had no time for great demonstrations, no taste for loud or empty professions; but the root of the matter was alive and upspringing in the depths of his nature, ready to appear at the proper season. "Service" was the motto of his life; his words were no fruitless flowers of rhetoric, but the blossoms of his deeds; and the ear that waited for only flattery or glozing commendation from him, was sure to be disappointed. The tireless benefactor,—the new Prometheus, would have been ill employed in

Unfruitful labor and light-thoughted folly,

but his heart was tenderly alive to the real wants and feelings of those whom he served.

An ever-welling impulse towards good deeds cannot owe its origin to reason, though reason must guide and control the stream, lest it run to waste, or carry with it an unprofitable softness.

It may be mentioned here that the long, severe and fatal illness of Mrs. Washington's daughter, was the darkest cloud that overspread Mount Vernon for many years of quiet time. The feeble child was the darling of her mother; and her prolonged suffering made large drafts, not only upon the tender mother, but upon the kind step-father; and when at length she died, Wash-



Washington at the Bedside of Miss Custis.

ington, who was just setting out upon a long journey of exploration, preparatory to the purchase of some tracts of land at the West, gave up the expedition, and staid at home to comfort and cheer his wife under her great affliction. Mrs. Lewis, granddaughter of Mrs. Washington, says that on the occasion of this young lady's death, Washington exhibited a passionate excess of feeling—falling on his knees at the bedside, and praying aloud and with tears, that she might be spared, unconscious that even as he spoke, life had departed. We find, by his diary after that time, that he took Mrs. Washington out every day, driving about the neighborhood, and calling on intimate friends, endeavoring by exercise in the open air, and by the society of those she loved, to turn her thoughts from the too constant contemplation of her loss. She was a woman of strong affections, very quiet and retiring in her habits, and devoted to her family; and Washington's sympathy was never wanting when she suffered from loss or separation.

The constant flow of company to Mount Vernon, where Washington may be said almost to have kept open house for many years, obliged Mrs. Washington to attend very closely to her domestic duties; for a Virginia housekeeper finds it no easy matter to provide a company dinner every day, with no market at hand, and only slaves to depend on. One little expression of the general's speaks volumes as to that matter:— "Would any person believe," he says, "that with *a*

hundred and one cows, actually reported at a late enumeration of the cattle, I should still be obliged to buy butter for my family?"

Judging of other supplies by this specimen, we must think Mrs. Washington almost as good a general as her husband, if she managed daily to entertain people of eminence from all parts of the country, as well as an endless round of country neighbors; making every body welcome, and providing in such style as was becoming in a large and elegant establishment. The hunt always ended in a dinner, sometimes at Belvoir, the seat of Mr. Fairfax, a little further down the river, but more generally at Mount Vernon, and as the company remained for the night, the next day's weather would sometimes keep them from going home. It is on one of these occasions that we find in the Diary—

"At home all day at cards—it snowing." In those days cards had not yet been proscribed, as they are in ours. Washington seems to have played occasionally, but was evidently quite indifferent about it; he probably resorted to a game as the easiest way of entertaining company, shut up in a lonely country-house through an impracticable storm. Mr. Custis says he played only whist, and in later and more anxious times discarded even that.

But need we apologize for this amusement, which though disapproved in our day, was universally allowed in his time by the society in which he lived? Washington's habits require no apologies or conceal-

ments. He is not amenable in these matters to standards set up since his day. The spirit of his life is one which the most rigid may imitate with advantage. His self-sacrifice, his temperance, his consideration for others, his rational and practical views of duty, make up a whole that fears no picking at, however zealous. He would have been slow to believe, probably, that the day would ever come when good people could be found who would condemn dancing, yet refuse to condemn slavery; who would consider card-playing a sin, yet utter no fulminations against what Washington himself, born and bred in the midst of it, calls "a wicked, cruel and unnatural trade." His just and manly mind weighed things at their real and practical value, and had little regard for artificial or arbitrary standards.

We find him ever promoting the virtues, but not often discussing them; *never* disputing as to which was virtue and which was not. The virtues were to him no shadows, changing with the times; but all great, strong, well-defined realities, asking nobody's patronage, but commanding every body's allegiance. If you had attacked as wrong any practice of his, no persuasion or pathetic remonstrance would have been required. He would have said, in his simple, direct way, "Show me that it is injurious and I will banish it for ever." But unless you convinced him, you would in vain have driven him into conformity by bugbears of unpopularity or odium.

The "Temperance cause," as such, had never been

heard of, in his day, and he, like all the world, thought the use of wine and other liquors as proper and necessary as that of milk or bread. He always used them, whether to his benefit or injury it is difficult to say, but probably without ever speculating on the subject. Perhaps the green tea he was so fond of, and which he drank at breakfast and in the evening, may have done him more harm than the "two or three glasses of good wine" that we know he took after dinner, or the occasional stronger potations his minutely kept accounts tell us that he used, on his journeys and other occasions.

But there are two papers of his, touching this matter of intemperance, that are both characteristic and amusing; one an agreement with a drunken gardener, the satirical gravity of which is irresistible. It is a temperance sermon of the most piquant kind:

"Articles of Agreement made this twelfth day of April, Anno Domini, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, by and between George Washington, Esq., of the Parish of Truro, in the County of Fairfax, State of Virginia, on the one part, and Philip Bater, Gardener, on the other. *Witness*, that the said Philip Bater, for and in consideration of the covenants herein hereafter mentioned, doth promise and agree to serve the said George Washington for the term of one year, as a Gardener, and that he will, during said time, conduct himself soberly, diligently and honestly—that he will faithfully and industriously perform all and every part of his duty as a Gardener, to the best of his know-

ledge and abilities, and that he will not, at any time suffer himself to be disguised with liquor, except on the times hereafter mentioned.

"In consideration of these things being well and truly performed on the part of the said Philip Bater, the said George Washington doth agree to allow him (the said Philip) the same kind and quantity of provisions as he has heretofore had; and likewise, annually, a decent suit of clothes, befitting a man in his station; to consist of a coat, vest and breeches;—a working jacket, and breeches of home-spun, besides; two white shirts;—three check do;—two linnen pocket-handkerchiefs, two pair linnen overalls;—as many pair of shoes as are actually necessary for him;—four Dollars at Christmas, with which he may be drunk four days and four nights; two Dollars at Easter to effect the same purpose; two Dollars at Whitsuntide, to be drunk two days;—a dram in the morning and a drink of Grog at Dinner at noon.

"For the true and faithful performance of all and each of these things, the parties have hereunto set their hands, this twenty-third day of April, Anno Domini, 1787.

"+ PHILIP BATER, his mark.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Witness,

"GEORGE A. WASHINGTON.

"TOBIAS LEAR."

The two young men witnesses must have laughed

(very quietly and privately, though,) at the execution of this curious document.

The other is more like an exhortation of the present day. It will be observed that Washington accords with the Total Abstinents in calling strong drink a poison.

(TO AN OVERSEER.)

"I shall not close this letter without exhorting you to refrain from spirituous liquors; they will prove your ruin if you do not. Consider how little a drunken man differs from a beast; the latter is not endowed with reason, the former deprives himself of it; and when that is the case, acts like a brute, annoying and disturbing every one around him; nor is this all, nor, as it respects himself, the worst of it. By degrees it renders a person feeble, and not only unable to serve others but to help himself; and being an act of his own, he falls from a state of usefulness into contempt, and at length suffers, if not perishes, in penury and want.

"Don't let this be your case. Shew yourself more of a man and a Christian than to yield to so intolerable a vice, which cannot, I am certain, (to the greatest lover of liquor,) give more pleasure to sip in the poison, (for it is no better,) than the consequence of it in bad behavior at the moment, and the more serious evils produced by it afterwards, must give pain.

"I am your Friend,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

It is certain that Washington hated excess of every kind. Mr. Custis says that so far as personal habits went, tobacco was an abomination to him, which seems remarkable when we consider that he raised and dealt in it for so many years. His private dislike of it may have arisen from the fact that he was particularly neat. We have some little reason to suspect that Mrs. Washington took snuff, as it was the fashion for ladies to do in those days. In one of the orders sent to England, in September, 1759, occur the following items:

"3 lbs. best Scotch snuff.

"3 lbs. best violette Strasburg," (a fashionable snuff.)

Perhaps, however, this was only for the use of visitors, whose boxes might happen to be empty during some of those long snow-storms that throw people upon their vices. We see, in the orders sent to England in early times, that Washington made minute as well as ample preparation for the accommodation of guests. Next to agricultural improvements, company seems to have been the leading idea of his early domestic life.

CHAPTER XX.

Public affairs not forgotten—Independent companies—Organized resistance—Fairfax Resolves—Economy and self-denial—Non-importation act—Boston Port Bill—Public fast—Patrick Henry's opinion of Washington.

CLOSELY as Washington seemed to be occupied in rural affairs, and in the duties of a most extensive hospitality at Mount Vernon, during the period immediately preceding the final outbreak of the Revolutionary spirit, he had in no degree excused himself from the most intimate knowledge of public affairs, or from those civil duties which carried him often from his home to the Virginian seat of government, where he met and conversed with the best-informed men in the State, and had his own sober and reasoning patriotism warmed and inspired, by the noble sentiments of a circle of statesmen and planters of whom the Old Dominion had, in that day, so much reason to be proud. Patrick Henry, Lee, Wythe, Randolph, George Mason, the Fairfaxes, all the prominent men on both sides, were his constant companions, at home and abroad; and from the conflict of their views, all well-informed, honorable and experienced men as they were, he was able

to mature opinions which he never, throughout his whole career, saw reason to change. Thus fitted for the approaching crisis, it is not to be wondered at that Washington was among the earliest to notice and draw conclusions from the encroachments of Great Britain on American liberty. He might easily have excused himself, on the ground of past services and impaired health; for he had gone through severe duties in the British cause, and his health had never been fully re-established even by the robust, active, open-air life that it was his pleasure to lead. He continued subject to intermittents, as well as to difficulties of the throat and lungs, whenever he took cold or over-exerted himself. But he had no thought of self where public duty was concerned, and we find him considered by all the Independent companies of Virginia, as their destined commander. Mr. Smyth, very angry, but still honest enough, if we may judge by internal evidence, says—"It was at Alexandria that George Washington first stepped forth as the public patron and leader of sedition and revolt, having subscribed fifty pounds to these purposes when others subcribed only five, and having accepted the command of the first company of armed associators against the British government."

We have no doubt this is all very true, for we know that Washington aided the Independent companies in every way in his power. One of these companies prayed him to take command of them, as field-officer, and that he would "be pleased to direct the fashion of

their uniform;" they also acquainted him with the motto of their company, AUT LIBER, AUT NULLUS, which was to appear on their colors. He never refused these requests.

At one time before the commencement of general hostilities, he came very near being called into active service as commander of several of these companies, who put themselves under arms and reported themselves in readiness to march, with the object of reclaiming and rescuing a quantity of powder which Governor Dinwiddie had caused to be removed from the magazine at Williamsburg, and placed on board a ship-of-war in the river. More than seven hundred men, well armed, had collected in Fredricksburg, but the governor wisely promised that the affair should be arranged to the satisfaction of the people.

This little flurry concluded the connection of Washington with these patriotic, independent companies; for he soon after went to the Continental Congress, and from there to Cambridge as commander-in-chief, where his greater public duties absorbed, for a long while, the attention he had been accustomed to give to those of his own State and neighborhood.

But to return, for the present, to Virginia doings, and the preparations for organized resistance. Some of these are very interesting; in their very nature significant of the kind of struggle that was to follow, just as the full, round and weighty grain of seed-wheat foretells the quality and abundance of the harvest it is to

bring. Those who were preparing the mighty change were patriots and men of honor; their reasons for acting were honest and sensible; their grievances were real and their hearts determined. The public mind was warm and ready for the good seed, and the sunshine of divine favor waiting to be gracious to it.

The people in general had never thought much about Liberty, as a possession. It was their birthright, and they expected it of course. They enjoyed it as we breathe the air and drink the water, without reflecting upon its value. It was only when they began to find it encroached upon, that they became aware how precious it was. Good and loyal subjects they had always been; proud of their loyalty and delighting to show it on all occasions; fighting the king's battles and drinking his health, without misgiving or demur, and calling England "home," as if they expected to return to it.

The Stamp Act and other measures for the oppression of the Colonies, aroused a different spirit. Parliament showed a disposition rather piratical than parental, relying more on brute force than on justice, and treating remonstrance with something worse than neglect. The king was on the wrong side from the beginning; and whatever may have been the blunders or the villainies of his ministers, he never thought they went far enough in taxing, fighting, or punishing the "rebels." Dutiful addresses and humble petitions only made him more insolent and determined, and the smell of blood acted upon him as it does upon wild animals, making him

more and more ferocious. But an awful retribution was preparing; all the surer for having proceeded very slowly and moderately at first. This patience had given time for the aggressors to fill up the measure of wrongs, and to arouse the colonists to the pitch of a death struggle.

It has been supposed by some that the wealth observed among the Americans, the expensive modes of living and elegant entertainments reported by the army officers on their return to England, had something to do with exciting a desire to tax America; and Mr. Weems observes, that the plate which was often borrowed from family to family when distinguished strangers were to be entertained, contributed to encourage exaggerated notions on this point. Be this as it may, nothing could be more intolerable than the spirit displayed by the mother country at this time.

The Fairfax County Resolves (June 18th, 1774), afterwards so celebrated, were passed at a meeting of which Washington was chairman. They are drafted in the handwriting of George Mason, but they received the full sanction of the chairman, except the twenty-third article, which proposes "a humble and dutiful remonstrance to his Majesty." "As for the resolution for addressing the House," he says, in a long letter to his friend Bryan Fairfax, "I own to you, sir, I think the whole might as well have been expunged. * * * * What hope have we from petitioning, when they tell us, that now or never is the time to fix the matter?

Shall we, after this, whine and cry for relief, when we have already tried it in vain? Or shall we supinely sit and see one province after another fall a sacrifice to despotism?"

One of the most important of these Resolves is the fifteenth, which recommends the non-importation of any British goods, except articles of the first necessity. The Resolve immediately preceding having urged that "Every little jarring interest and dispute, which has ever happened between these colonies, should be buried in eternal oblivion; that all manner of luxury and extravagance ought immediately to be laid aside, as totally inconsistent with the threatening and gloomy prospect before us; that it is the indispensable duty of all the gentlemen and men of fortune to set examples of temperance, fortitude, frugality and industry," etc.

The seventeenth article declares—"That it is the opinion of this meeting, that, during our present difficulties and distress, no slaves ought to be imported into any of the British colonies on this continent; and we take this opportunity of declaring our most earnest wishes to see an entire stop for ever put to such a wicked, cruel and unnatural trade."

George Washington and Charles Broadwater were appointed to lay these resolves before the Convention at Williamsburg, as the sense of the people of Fairfax County, "upon the measures proper to be taken in the present alarming and dangerous situation of America."

As yet there was evidently no settled plan of as-

serting entire independence of the mother country. Washington, though he scorned the idea of petitioning again, yet anticipated, no doubt, that the spirited and decided action of the colonists would induce concessions on the part of the government, which would make it possible for America to remain loyal without dishonor.

Mr. Sparks cites from Gordon, a conversation said to have taken place in 1759, between Dr. Franklin and Mr. Pratt, afterwards Lord Camden. "For all you Americans say of your loyalty"—observed Mr Pratt, "I know you will one day throw off your dependence upon this country, and, notwithstanding your boasted affection to it, will set up for independence of it."

Franklin answered—"No such idea is entertained in the mind of the Americans; and no such idea will ever enter their heads, unless you grossly abuse them."

"Very true," replied Mr. Pratt, "that is one of the main causes I see will happen, and will produce the event." The abuse came duly, but even then, the idea of shaking off the yoke did not readily find entertainment among the great body of the colonists.

When Patrick Henry first used the expression, Mr. Wirt says, "at the word *independence*, the company appeared to be startled, for they had never heard any thing of the kind before even suggested."

It was not until after a contemptuous rejection of their humble petitions, that the colonists began to talk of independence without hesitation. The thoughts of Mr. Adams and a few others had, it is true, darted for-

ward in advance of the general sentiment of the country, and a letter of Mr. Adams had found its way into the hands of the British Ministry, which irritated and alarmed them exceedingly. It was only the *word*, however, that carried a sound of too much daring to American ears. The *thing* was in preparation, consciously or unconsciously, in every part of the United Colonies; and the government of Great Britain were clearing the way before it, blind pioneers as they were, leaving not a single obstacle, in the shape of habits of reverence or hope of future advantage; but tearing up by the roots all "honor, love, observance," by the insolent and tyrannical spirit in which they lorded it over their transatlantic brethren. To awaken the attention of England to the rights and interests of the colonies, by starving her trade and manufactures, was a favorite plan with Washington, whose turn of mind and habits inclined him to think first of sacrifice and self-denial, as a good means of accomplishing an object. Diplomacy and arms were not naturally the first resort with him; he always preferred simple and direct modes of obviating difficulties, beginning as near home as possible, and trying grass and clods before he threw stones.

In considering the subject of suspending the importation of all but articles of the first necessity, he goes into a careful consideration of the objections that would be made to it by different classes of society, and concludes that the greatest opposition will perhaps be

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made by gentlemen of property, accustomed to luxury, and able to buy what they liked.

"These," he says, "were they not to consider the object in view, and the good of others, might think it hard to be curtailed in their living and enjoyments."

But he goes on to show that as luxury and extravagance have impoverished many, so a good plea to retrench expenses will enable those to live within bounds, who might otherwise be induced, from mere pride, to go on keeping up appearances, however ruinously. "Upon the whole, therefore," he says in a letter to George Mason, "I think the scheme a good one, and that it ought to be tried here."

But when it came to forbidding exports, his sense of justice was not weakened by the fervor of patriotic feeling. The colonists were largely indebted to merchants in England, and the only mode of payment was by exporting produce thither. He could not assent to the proposition that it was but just the English merchants should share in the evils consequent upon the bad government of their rulers.

The sophistry which would shift off private obligations upon the public, found no harbor in his clear, honest head.

He insisted that, for the present at least, no prohibitions of exports should be attempted. "I think, or at least I hope," he says, "that there is public virtue enough left among us to deny ourselves every thing but the bare necessaries of life, to accomplish this end.

* * * The stopping of our exports would be a shorter method than the other to effect this purpose; but if we owe money to Great Britain, nothing but the last necessity can justify the non-payment of it; and therefore I have great doubts upon this head, and wish to see the other method first tried, which is legal, and will facilitate these payments."

When the news came of a special act of revengeful tyranny on the part of government, commonly known as the Boston Port Bill, in other words closing the port of Boston, forbidding vessels to enter or depart, and inflicting other injuries upon the inhabitants of that free-spirited town, the Virginia House of Burgesses, then in session, passed indignant resolutions of sympathy, and an order that the first day of June, on which day the obnoxious bill was to take effect, "should be set apart by that House as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, devoutly to implore the divine interposition for averting the heavy calamity which threatened destruction to their civil rights and the evils of civil war, and to give them one heart and one mind, firmly to oppose, by all just and proper means, every injury to American rights."

The governor, Lord Dunmore, was so much offended by this serious outburst of patriotic sympathy, that he dissolved the House the next day. But the delegates none the less met at a public house, and proposed a general convention, and when the first of June

arrived, the fast was strictly observed, and Washington enters upon his diary :—

"Went to church, and fasted all day."

On the first of August, 1774, the convention met, and after sixty-six days' sitting, appointed seven delegates to a general Congress, which had been summoned to meet at Philadelphia, September fifth.

George Washington was, of course, one of the seven, and he accordingly proceeded to Philadelphia in company with Patrick Henry and Edmund Pendleton. The proceedings of that first Congress have not been made public, and we cannot, therefore, assign the particular share of merit which should be claimed for Washington on that occasion.

Patrick Henry's testimony is, however, well known. On being asked whom he considered the greatest man at the Congress—"If you speak of eloquence," he said, "Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina, is by far the greatest orator; but if you speak of solid information and sound judgment, Colonel Washington is unquestionably the greatest man on that floor."

And we may be permitted to add, that if we judge the quality of oratory by its effects, Patrick Henry himself was justly entitled to that pre-eminence in eloquence which he so modestly bestows on another.

CHAPTER XXI.

Remonstrance changing to hostility—An army to be raised—A general wanted—Several candidates—Choice falls on Washington—His acceptance and stipulation—Letters to his wife.

In May, 1775, Washington had made up his mind that "the peaceful plains of America" were "either to be drenched with blood or inhabited by slaves." Patrick Henry had declared "An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!"

The second Congress met at Philadelphia, John Hancock in the chair. Military affairs being of immediate importance, Washington was chairman of all committees for their regulation, and his opinion was paramount in every thing relating to the army.

Boston being actually in a state of siege, the question of supplies, of discipline, of legislative sanction was perceived to be urgent. Hancock, entitled by his great services and sacrifices to any honor in the gift of his country, had a natural ambition to be appointed commander-in-chief, which was the less to be wondered at that his own town had been the first to resist and

the first to suffer in the cause of liberty, and was even at the moment the seat of war.

General Charles Lee, a sort of genteel Capt. Dalgetty, who had been in military service since he was eleven years old; commanded a company of grenadiers in the French war; been shot through the body at Ticonderoga; narrowly escaped death at the siege of Fort Niagara, under Prideaux; fought in Portugal under General Burgoyne; been employed by Stanislaus, king of Poland, and killed more than one of his friends in the duello; reappeared in America at the present crisis, under the impulse of the unquiet and ambitious spirit which loves a storm and hopes to profit by it. There had gone forth a great idea of his military qualifications, and he would have had a good chance of being chosen first in command, but for the accident of birth, which made him an Englishman instead of an American.

General Artemas Ward had shown himself a gallant officer in the Massachusetts difficulties, and had proved his military skill by shutting up the British in Boston, all which made it very natural that his own State should desire to see him at the head of the army.

A good deal of feeling was manifested in favor of these and other candidates, while many members, northern and southern, thought George Washington was the man best fitted for the great charge.

He, meanwhile, stirred not in the matter, though he had a secret sense of what the result would probably

be, and was endeavoring to resolve upon doing his duty in the matter, however contrary to his wishes. We may easily suppose the struggle to have been a severe one; patriotism and the natural impulse towards the acceptance of so high an honor, contending, in a mind like his, with a deep sense of the difficulties of the position, the extreme uncertainty of the issue, and the certain loss, for the time, of all that as a private man he most prized, domestic quiet and the safe and wholesome pleasures and duties of his rural abode.

John Adams, always warm, generous and bold, saw the necessity of immediate decision upon so important a point. Thoroughly acquainted with the various opinions, prejudices and preferences of those present, he seized the first opportunity to bring the matter to a crisis. His own account of the scene is this:—Having moved that Congress should adopt as its own the army at Cambridge and appoint a general for it, he adds, "As I had reason to believe this was a point of some difficulty, I had no hesitation to declare, that I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia, who was among us, and very well known to all of us; a gentleman, whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character, would command the approbation of all America, and unite the cordial exertion of all the colonies better than any other person in the Union. Mr. Washington, who happened to sit near the door, as

soon as he heard me allude to him, from his usual modesty, darted into the library-room."

After this the debate was warm, though not against Washington, but only in favor of General Ward, and the decision was postponed.

On the 15th of June, Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, nominated George Washington, of Virginia, as commander-in-chief, and the election was unanimous. It was announced to him on the 16th, by the presiding officer of the Assembly.

Washington rose in his place and said:—

"MR. PRESIDENT,—Though I am truly sensible of the high honor done me in this appointment, yet I feel great distress, from the consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for the support of the glorious cause.

"I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

"But lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with.

"As to pay, sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted

me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it.

"I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge; and that is all I desire."

There was always something princely about Washington, and it never shone out more conspicuously than on this occasion, when he wholly set aside the order of Congress as to pay, and constituted himself the judge and regulator with regard to pecuniary relations between himself and the country.

Personal independence was as dear to him as national, and he seems to have made use of his large fortune as a safeguard against all temptations of a pecuniary kind. That this fortune must suffer by the duty he had now undertaken, he knew very well; but that was to be his own sacrifice, and it was but of small account in comparison of the dearer one of domestic happiness. He writes to his brother,—

"I am now to bid adieu to you, and to every kind of domestic ease, for a while. I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which, perhaps, no safe harbor is to be found.

"I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the colonies to take the command of the continental army; an honor I neither sought after nor desired, as I am thoroughly convinced that it requires great abili-

ties, and much more experience than I am master of."

Then speaking of Mrs. Washington :—

"I shall hope that my friends will visit and endeavor to keep up the spirits of my wife, as much as they can, for my departure will, I know, be a cutting stroke upon her; and on this account alone I have many disagreeable sensations."

To Mrs. Washington herself he writes :—

"PHILADELPHIA, 18 *June*, 1775.

"MY DEAREST,—I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised in defence of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston, to take upon me the command of it.

"You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven

times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return.

"That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures as would have reflected dishonor upon myself, and given pain to my friends.

"This, I am sure, could not, and ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, confidently, on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content, and a tolerable degree of tranquillity; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid.

"As life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every man the necessity of settling his temporal concerns, while it is in his power and while the mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place (for I had no time to do it before I left home), got Col. Pendleton to draught a will for me, by the directions I gave him, which I will now enclose. The provision made for you in case of my death, will, I hope, be agreeable.

"I shall add nothing more, as I have several letters to write, but to desire that you will remember me to your friends, and to assure you that I am with the most unfeigned regard, my dear Patsy, your affectionate," &c.

And again, as he was leaving Philadelphia:—

"PHILADELPHIA, *June* 23d, 1775.

"MY DEAREST,—As I am within a few minutes of leaving this city, I could not think of departing from it without dropping you a line, especially as I do not know whether it will be in my power to write again until I get to the camp at Boston. I go fully trusting in that Providence which has been more bountiful to me than I deserve, and in full confidence of a happy meeting with you in the fall. I have not time to add more, as I am surrounded by company to take leave of me. I retain an unalterable affection for you, which neither time nor distance can change. My best love to

Jack and Nelly, and regards to the rest of the family, concludes me with the utmost sincerity,

"Your entire

"GEO. WASHINGTON."

What generosity of patriotism there was in the men of those days, and how a common indignation and a common danger seem to have raised them above the mean, petty jealousies and heart-burnings that so disfigure public doings in times of peace and prosperity! We look upon such nobleness with a sort of wonder; yet what can be more certain than that any attack from without upon our liberties would raise up among us—we dare hardly say a Washington—but such men as John Adams, Richard Henry Lee, John Hancock, Patrick Henry, Benjamin Franklin, and a host more, who sprang up, as at some Ithuriel touch, when danger threatened all that is dearest to the sons of freedom. It is but the canker of ease and abundance that we see and often mourn in the political aspect of things here at home. It is the young heir living upon his father's earnings, without a thought of the toil and sacrifice by which the fortune came, yet possessing all the while talents, aye, and virtues, too, for the acquisition of such another, if need were. Who can doubt it? Let us never, by a want of faith in our countrymen, dishonor our sires and the inheritance they have left us!

The battle of Bunker Hill having taken place in the time that intervened between Washington's accept-

ance and the receipt of his commission, he set out for Cambridge with no lingering doubt as to the nature, meaning, and consequences of the service in which he had pledged all.

He knew that life, and what was dearer than life, hung upon his movements when he left Philadelphia, on the 21st of June, 1775, accompanied by his chosen associates, Generals Lee and Schuyler. He had just reviewed several companies of militia, to the number of about two thousand men, and these escorted him out of the city, one troop of light-horse accompanying him to New York, where he was received with enthusiasm, and all possible public honors. "No burning of powder, however!" says one of the letter-writers, and with good reason, for New York had at that moment but four barrels of that noisy article within her bounds, all the rest (one thousand barrels) having been forwarded to Cambridge, to meet the greater necessities there. The frigate Asia lay anchored off the Battery, and Gov. Tryon was momently expected home from England; but the Provincial Congress of New York and New Jersey, by its president, offered a congratulatory address, concluding with the significant compliment—"We have the most flattering hope of success in the glorious struggle for American liberty, and the fullest assurances that whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of each American soul, an accommodation with our mother country, you will cheerfully resign the important deposit committed into

your hands, and reassume the character of our worthiest citizen."

General Washington met this hint with his usual simplicity and directness.

He replied as follows, in behalf of himself and his generals, to this part of the address:—

"As to the fatal but necessary operations of war, when we assumed the soldier we did not lay aside the citizen; and we shall most sincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour, when the establishment of American liberty on the most firm and solid foundations, shall enable us to return to our private stations, in the bosom of a free, peaceful, and happy country."

CHAPTER XXII.

The battle of Bunker Hill already fought—Washington hurries on—Takes command under the Great Elm at Cambridge—The impression he makes—Letters to General Gage—Want of money, clothing, powder, and all the necessaries of war—Sarcasms cast upon the supineness of the army and its general—Cares and troubles of Washington—His patience under them.

It was not until he reached New York that Washington received a detailed account of the battle of Bunker Hill. He saw the necessity for despatch, and staid no longer at New York than was necessary for his arrangements. Leaving General Schuyler in command there, he hastened on, was met by an honorary deputation at Springfield, and reached Watertown, three miles from Cambridge, July 2d. The speech of welcome runs thus: "The laudable zeal for the common cause of America, and compassion for the distresses of this colony, exhibited by the great despatch made in your journey hither, fully justify the universal satisfaction we have, with pleasure, observed on this occasion; and are promising presages, that the great expectations formed from your personal character and military abilities are well-founded.

"We would not presume to prescribe to your Excellency, but supposing you would choose to be informed of the general character of the soldiers who compose this army, beg leave to represent, that the greatest part of them have not before seen service; and although naturally brave and of good understanding, yet, for want of experience in military life, have but little knowledge of divers things most essential to the preservation of health, and even of life.

"The youth in the army are not impressed with the absolute necessity of cleanliness in their dress and lodging, continued exercise, and strict temperance, to preserve them from diseases frequently prevailing in camps; especially among those, who, from their childhood, have been used to a laborious life. We beg leave to assure you, that this Congress will, at all times, be ready to attend to such requisitions as you may have occasion to make, and to contribute all the aid in our power to the cause of America and your happiness and ease, in the discharge of the duties of your exalted office. We most fervently implore Almighty God, that the blessings of Divine Providence may rest on you; that your head may be covered in the day of battle; that every necessary assistance may be afforded; and that you may be long continued in life and health, a blessing to mankind."

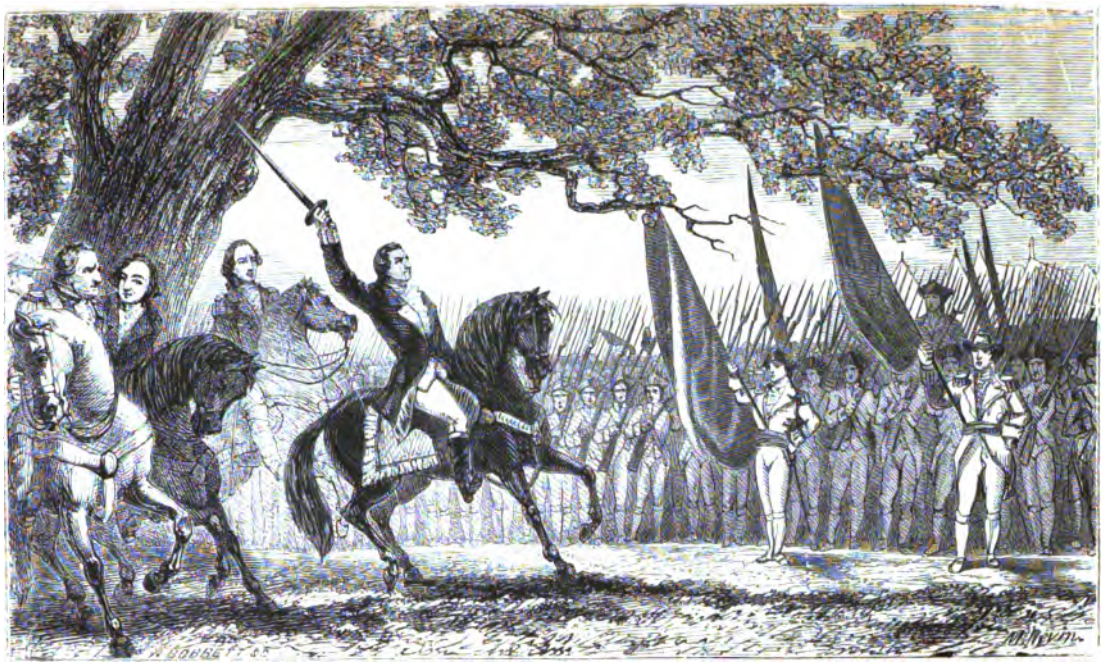
As the commander-in-chief entered the camp, he was greeted with salvos of artillery, spite of the scarcity of powder; and the officers and men who gazed at first

with curiosity on the general as he passed, learned at once the lesson of admiration and reverence, which it was his privilege to inspire wherever he went.

On the morning of July 3d, the troops were arrayed on the common, at Cambridge, to receive their general. The cortège from Watertown was anxiously watched for. Though Washington was not then the Washington of our memories, yet enough had been said of him, of his bravery, his patriotism, his talents, and his gallant bearing, to excite unusual interest in the troops. At length the trampling of horse amid a cloud of dust, ushered in the commander-in-chief and his suite, all picked men and finely mounted. As they approached the line the eye sought and easily recognized him in whose bearing should shine forth the right to rule. At the same moment the central figure galloped forward, and wheeling his charger beneath the Great Elm which still adorns the spot, drew his sword, and, flashing it in the air, took command, in form, of the armies of the United Colonies.

"It was not difficult to distinguish him from all others," says Thacher. "He is tall and well-proportioned, and his personal appearance truly noble and majestic."

That this was not mere outward appearance, or even the effect of mental traits only, we are assured from various anecdotes showing the great physical power of Washington at the time. One in particular recounted by an eye-witness is quoted by Mr. Irving. It occur-



Washington assuming the Command at Cambridge.

red on the green, at Cambridge. It happened that some dispute among the soldiers had brought on a fight, and as blows bring blows, the mischief spread until a great number of men were engaged, and there was a general and dangerous *melée*.

In the midst of it, says the narrator, the commander-in-chief galloped up, I know not from what quarter; but quick as lightning he sprang from his horse, threw the bridle to his servant, and dashed in among the combatants. Seizing two great powerful fellows, by the collar, one in each hand, he shook them soundly, talking to them all the while, and then mounted his horse again and rode quietly off, the crowd having dispersed at once, requiring no further hint.

Mrs. Adams says of the impression made on her at first sight: "Dignity, ease and complacency, the gentleman and the soldier, look agreeably blended in him. Modesty marks every line and feature of his face."

These lines of Dryden instantly occurred to her:

> Mark his majestic fabric! He's a temple
> Sacred by birth and built by hands divine;
> His soul's the deity that lodges there;
> Nor is the pile unworthy of the God."

From all contemporary testimony we derive the impression that in the birth, nurture and destiny of this man, so blest in all good gifts, Providence seems to have intended the realization of Milton's ideal type of glorious manhood:

A creature who, endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright, with front serene,
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence,
Magnanimous, to correspond with Heaven;
But, grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither, with heart and voice and eyes,
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works.

The first general order issued by Washington reads as follows:—

"The Continental Congress having now taken all the troops of the several colonies, which have been raised or which may be hereafter raised for the support and defence of the liberties of America, into their pay and service, they are now the troops of the United Provinces of North America; and it is hoped that all distinctions of colonies will be laid aside, so that one and the same spirit may animate the whole, and the only contest be, who shall render, on this great and trying occasion, the most essential service to the great and common cause in which we are all engaged. It is required and expected that exact discipline be observed, and due subordination prevail through the whole army; as a failure in these most essential points must necessarily produce extreme hazard, disorder, and confusion, and end in shameful disappointment and disgrace. The general most earnestly requires and expects a due observance of those articles of war, established for the

government of the army, which forbid profane cursing, swearing, and drunkenness. And in like manner he requires and expects of all officers and soldiers, not engaged on actual duty, a punctual attendance on divine service, to implore the blessing of Heaven upon the means used for our safety and defence."

As to the appearance and condition of the American camp, we find in Sparks' Life the following letter from Rev. William Emerson, a chaplain in the army. It was written a few days after the arrival of the commander-in-chief.

"There is great overturning in the camp, as to order and regularity. New lords, new laws. The Generals Washington and Lee are upon the lines every day. New orders from his Excellency are read to the respective regiments every morning after prayers. The strictest government is taking place, and great distinction is made between officers and soldiers.

"Every one is made to know his place and keep in it, or be tied up and receive thirty or forty lashes according to his crime. Thousands are at work every day from four till eleven o'clock in the morning. It is surprising how much work has been done. The lines are extended almost from Cambridge to Mystic River, so that very soon it will be morally impossible for the enemy to get between the works, except in one place; which is supposed to be left purposely unfortified to entice the enemy out of their fortresses. Who would have thought, twelve months past, that all Cambridge and

Charlestown would be covered over with American camps, and cut up into forts and intrenchments, and all the lands, fields, orchards, laid common, horses and cattle feeding in the choicest mowing land, whole fields of corn eaten down to the ground, and large parks of well regulated locusts cut down for firewood and other public uses? This, I must say, looks a little melancholy. My quarters are at the foot of the famous Prospect Hill, where such great preparations are made for the reception of the enemy. It is very diverting to walk among the camps. They are as different in their forms, as the owners are in their dress; and every tent is a portraiture of the temper and tastes of the persons who encamp in it. Some are made of boards, and some of sailcloth. Some partly of one and partly of the other. Again, others are made of stone and turf, brick or brush. Some are thrown up in a hurry, others curiously wrought, the doors and windows done with wreaths and withes in the manner of a basket. Some are your proper tents and marquees, looking like the regular camp of the enemy. In these are the Rhode Islanders, who are furnished with tent-equipage and every thing in the most exact English style. However, I think this great variety is rather a beauty than a blemish in the army."

Now it was that Washington undertook the intolerable duty of organizing a young army, without clothes, tents, ammunition, or money; with a rich, bitter and disciplined enemy in sight, and boiling blood on both sides. Here it was that General Gage, with whom he

had fought, side by side, twenty years before, on the Monongahela, so exasperated him by insolent replies to his remonstrances against the cruel treatment of American prisoners, that he gave directions for retaliation upon any of the enemy that might fall into American hands. He was, however, Washington still, even though burning with a holy anger; and, ere the order could reach its destination, it was countermanded, and a charge given to all concerned that the prisoners should be allowed parole, and that every other proper indulgence and civility should be shown them. His letters to General Gage are models of that kind of writing. In writing to Lord Dartmouth afterwards, the British commander, who had been rebuked with such cutting and deserved severity, observes with great significance, "The trials we have had, show the rebels are not the despicable rabble we have supposed them to be."

The British government caused General Washington's first letter to General Gage, with General Gage's reply, to be published, supposing probably, that the insolent tone of the latter would strike terror into the hearts of the rebels, while it inspired the royalists with new contempt for their adversaries. But it did not think proper to publish General Washington's rejoinder, one of the most characteristic letters he ever wrote:

To Lieutenant-General Gage.

"Head-Quarters, Cambridge, 20th *Aug.*, 1775.

"Sir,—I addressed you on the 11th instant, in terms

which gave the fairest scope for that humanity and politeness, which were supposed to form a part of your character. I remonstrated with you on the unworthy treatment shown to the officers and citizens of America, whom the fortune of war, chance, or a mistaken confidence had thrown into your hands. Whether British or American mercy, fortitude, and patience are most pre-eminent; whether our virtuous citizens, whom the hand of tyranny has forced into arms to defend their wives, their children, and their property, or the merciless instruments of lawless domination, avarice, and revenge, best deserve the appellation of rebels, and the punishment of that cord, which your affected clemency has forborne to inflict; whether the authority under which I act is usurped, or founded upon the general principles of liberty, were altogether foreign to the subject. I purposely avoided all political disquisition; nor shall I now avail myself of those advantages, which the sacred cause of my country, of liberty, and of human nature, give me over you; much less shall I stoop to retort and invective; but the intelligence you say you have received from our army requires a reply. I have taken time, sir, to make a strict inquiry, and find it has not the least foundation in truth.

"Not only your officers and soldiers have been treated with the tenderness due to fellow-citizens and brethren, but even those execrable parricides, whose counsels and aid have deluged their country with blood, have been protected from the fury of a justly

enraged people. Far from compelling or permitting their assistance, I am embarrassed with the numbers who crowd to our camp, animated with the purest principles of virtue and love to their country.

"You advise me to give free operation to truth, and to punish misrepresentation and falsehood. If experience stamps value upon counsel, yours must have a weight which few can claim. You best can tell how far the convulsion, which has brought such ruin on both countries, and shaken the mighty empire of Britain to its foundation, may be traced to these malignant causes.

"You affect, sir, to despise all rank not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honorable than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of all power. Far from making it a plea for cruelty, a mind of true magnanimity and enlarged ideas would comprehend and respect it.

"What may have been the ministerial views which have precipitated the present crisis, Lexington, Concord and Charlestown can best declare.

"May that God to whom you then appeal, judge between America and you. Under his Providence, those who influence the counsels of America, and all the other inhabitants of the United Colonies, at the hazard of their lives, are determined to hand down to

posterity those just and invaluable privileges which they received from their ancestors.

"I shall now, sir, close my correspondence with you, perhaps for ever. If your officers, our prisoners, receive a treatment from me different from that which I wished to show them, they and you will remember the occasion of it.

"I am, sir, your humble servant."

The difficulties under which the new army was laboring, are not to be described within reasonable compass, and they were utterly unsuspected by the public at the time. This occasioned many murmurs and many sarcasms about inactivity and too great prudence, which were very galling to Washington.

In writing to Richard Henry Lee, who had suggested something which was not to be attempted under the circumstances, he says: "To you, sir, I may account for my conduct; but I cannot declare the motives of it to every one, notwithstanding I know, that by not doing it, I shall stand in a very unfavorable light, in the opinion of those who expect much and will find little done, without understanding or perhaps giving themselves the trouble of inquiring into the cause. Such, however, is the fate of all those who are obliged to act the part I do; I must therefore submit to it, under the consciousness of having done my duty to the best of my abilities."

In a circular letter proposing an attack upon the

enemy's lines at Roxbury, Washington remarks: "The success of such an enterprise depends, I well know, upon the All-wise Disposer of events, and it is not within the reach of human wisdom to foretell the issue; but if the prospect is fair, the undertaking is justifiable for the following among other reasons which might be assigned," and he goes on to state the desirableness of satisfying the public expectation even at some risk.

His letters of the time show a multitude of cares and interests, and in spite of the immediate and pressing business about him, it would seem as if nothing was too remote or trifling to be remembered.

In a paper of instructions to General Arnold, then in Canada, (September, 1775,) we find the following curious item:

"If Lord Chatham's son should be in Canada, and in any way should fall into your power, you are enjoined to treat him with all possible deference and respect. You cannot err in paying too much honor to the son of so illustrious a character, and so true a friend to America."

And this: "I also give it in charge to you to avoid all disrespect of the religion of the country, and its ceremonies. Prudence, policy, and a true Christian spirit, will lead us to look with compassion upon their errors without insulting them. While we are contending for our own liberty, we should be very cautious not to violate the rights of conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the judge of the hearts of

men, and to him only in this case they are answerable."

In a public invitation to Canada to join the American cause, are these paragraphs:

"Come then, my brethren, unite with us in an indissoluble union; let us run together to the same goal. We have taken up arms in defence of our liberty, our property, our wives, and our children; we are determined to preserve them or die. We look forward with pleasure to that day, not far remote we hope, when the inhabitants of America shall have one sentiment, and the full enjoyment of the blessings of a free government.

"The cause of America, and of liberty, is the cause of every virtuous American citizen; whatever may be his religion or descent, the United Colonies know no distinction but such as slavery, corruption and arbitrary dominion may create. Come, then, ye generous citizens, range yourselves under the standard of general liberty, against which all the force and artifices of tyranny will never be able to prevail."

In a letter of the time to the President of Congress, Washington writes:—

"It gives me great pain to be obliged to solicit the attention of the honorable Congress to the state of this army, in terms which imply the slightest apprehension of being neglected. But my situation is inexpressibly distressing, to see the winter fast approaching upon a naked army, the time of their service within a few

weeks of expiring, and no provision yet made for such important events. Added to these, the military chest is totally exhausted; the paymaster has not a single dollar in hand; the commissary-general assures me he has strained his credit, for the subsistence of the army, to the utmost. The quartermaster-general is precisely in the same situation; and the greater part of the troops are in a state not far from mutiny, upon the deduction from their stated allowance. I know not to whom I am to impute this failure; but I am of opinion, if the evil is not immediately remedied, and more punctuality observed in future, the army must absolutely break up."

And so the strain runs, week after week, month after month, till our sympathy becomes painful as we read.

There were times when the spirits of the commander-in-chief sank to the very verge of despondency; though this is seldom betrayed in his public letters. When he writes to his friends and relatives, he unburthens his heart, as if for the relief which he dare seek in no other quarter. "Few people know," he writes to his friend Joseph Reed, "the predicament we are in; fewer still will believe, if any disaster happens to these lines, from what cause it flows. I have often thought how much happier I should have been if, instead of accepting the command under these circumstances, I had taken my musket on my shoulder and entered the ranks,—or if I could have justified the

measure to posterity and my own conscience, had retired to the back country and lived in a wigwam. If I shall be able to rise superior to these difficulties, I shall most religiously believe that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for surely if we get well through this month, it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages we labor under."

To his brother he writes:—"I have been here months together with (what will scarcely be believed) not thirty rounds of musket cartridges to a man; and have been obliged to submit to all the insults of the enemy's cannon, for want of powder, keeping what little we had for pistol distance."

It may easily be believed that under these depressing circumstances, Washington was not much disposed to gayety; and we hear, accordingly, that he repressed all the levity usually allowed in camps under the idea of keeping up the spirits of the soldiers. He felt that the circumstances of the time were far too serious to allow of any unguarded moments, or any slackening of the half-fitted reins of discipline. Even Mrs. Washington was not exempted from this stern rule; for in the winter, when her wedding day came round, and she wished to keep it as she had been accustomed to do at home, with a little gathering of friends, the general objected, and could only by great urgency be prevailed upon to allow it.

The treatment of prisoners continued to be a subject

of complaint on both sides, and Washington was sometimes provoked to think of retaliation, when any new outrage upon our people came to his knowledge. But he always relented, and set a noble example of forbearance to General Gage, whose personal resentment against the "rebels" made him sometimes very savage. A specimen of the way in which General Washington treated prisoners may be found in the following letter, conveying a quiet and gentlemanly rebuke to an old British colonel, then a prisoner of war at Hartford, Connecticut, who kept teazing him about small matters, such as being allowed to wear his sword, &c.

"My disposition does not allow me to follow the unworthy example set me by General Gage to its fullest extent. You possess all the essential comforts of life; why should you press for indulgences of a ceremonious kind, which give general offence?

"I have looked over all the papers sent me from Philadelphia. I find nothing in them upon the present subject, nor do I know whether the liberty of wearing your sword was given or taken. But I flatter myself, that, when you come to consider all circumstances, you will save me the trouble of giving any positive directions. You will easily conceive how much more grateful a compliance with the wishes of the people, among whom your residence may be longer than you expect, will appear, when it is the result of your prudence and good sense, rather than of a determination from me.

"I therefore should be unwilling to deprive you of

an opportunity of cultivating their esteem by so small a concession as this must be.

"As I suppose your several letters to me have been communicated to others, I cannot forbear considering your conduct in declaring, in a high tone, that, had you joined your regiment, you would have acted vigorously against this country and done all in your power to reduce it, as a deviation from the line of propriety and prudence which I should have expected to distinguish the conduct of so old and experienced an officer. Your being so entirely in our power, may extinguish the resentment which a generous and enlightened mind would otherwise feel; but I cannot commend the conduct which puts such a mind to the trial.

"I am, sir, your most obedient humble servant."

At the same time Washington wrote to the committee at Hartford:—"Allow me to recommend a gentleness, even to forbearance, with persons so entirely in our power. We know not what the chance of war may be; but, let it be what it will, the duties of humanity and kindness will demand from us such a treatment as we should expect from others, the case being reversed."

While besiegers and besieged lay equally inactive at Boston, and the whole country was wondering what such supineness could mean, it is curious to read the reasons given by each party to its own side, for not attacking the other. General Gage tells Lord Dartmouth that it is not advisable to attempt penetrating the coun-

try from Boston. "The enemy's forces are numerous," he says, "and such an attempt must be made under very great disadvantages; and even if successful, little would be gained by it, as neither horses, carriages, nor other means for moving forward could be procured. Our force is too small to be divided into detachments for this purpose, and success would answer no other end than to drive the rebels out of one stronghold into another."

At the same time, General Washington, writing to a Virginian friend, describes his own position thus:—

"The enemy in Boston and on the heights at Charlestown (two peninsulas surrounded in a manner by ships-of-war and floating batteries), are so strongly fortified as to render it almost impossible to force their lines, thrown up at the head of each neck.

"Without great slaughter on our side, or cowardice on theirs, it is absolutely so. We therefore can do no more than keep them besieged, which they are, to all intents and purposes, as closely as any troops on earth can be, who have an opening to the sea.

"Our advanced works and theirs are within musket-shot. We daily undergo a cannonade, which has done no injury to our works, and very little hurt to our men.

"These insults we are compelled to submit to for want of powder; being obliged, except now and then giving them a shot, to reserve what we have for closer work than cannon distance."

The levying of men, as it was the most urgent,

proved also the most trying business of the whole siege, and, next to the scarcity of ammunition, caused the greatest anxiety and disappointment to Washington as commander-in-chief. To create an army out of raw recruits, and those taken from a population whose very motive in taking arms was to secure liberty, was enough to discourage any man on whom the responsibility rested; and when it is considered that, for the sake of the despatch that was so necessary, it had been decided that any man enlisting fifty-nine recruits was entitled to become their captain, and that whoever succeeded in enlisting ten such companies had a right to be the colonel, the position of him whose duty it was to reduce this chaos of ignorance and inexperience to serviceable order and discipline, may be faintly conceived.

The enemy were believed to have in Boston about eleven thousand five hundred men, and it was considered requisite for the besieging force, whose line, reaching from Dorchester to Mystic River, embraced a distance of twelve miles, to have on the ground at least twenty-two thousand. About fourteen thousand five hundred colonial troops were reckoned fit for service. It was therefore necessary to raise immediately seven thousand five hundred men. For this number there were no tents, no provisions, no clothing, no money, above all no ammunition—"not powder enough in the whole camp for nine cartridges to a man."

A British officer wrote to a friend in London: "The rebel army are in so wretched a condition

as to clothing and accoutrements, that I believe no nation ever saw such a set of tatterdemalions. There are few coats among them but what are out at elbows, and in a whole regiment there is scarce a whole pair of breeches. Judge, then, how they must be pinched by a winter campaign."

Under these circumstances, the patience, the prudence, the humanity of Washington was put to the severest test. Far from having any notion of military obedience, the troops, fresh from the independence of the plough and the shop, discussed and passed judgment upon the orders they received, and obeyed or objected as they saw fit. Some did not like the articles presented to them, and refused to sign; others murmured at the want of all decent and even necessary provision for their wants, and feared that from present prospects there was danger of going on from bad to worse. It was all quite natural for citizen troops, even those of them who had consented to serve on principle; still more to be expected from such lawless men as must necessarily compose the bulk of every army. On the other hand, the new and feeble Congress was quite as jealous of the power of the army, and, fearing they were parting with their liberty, doled out the requisite support only drop by drop, as if it had been their life-blood. This, again, was not to be wondered at; but where, between these two pressures, stood the commander-in-chief? Suffering the *peine forte et dure* we may easily believe. Yet he was mild and pa-

tient with the grumbling soldiery, respectful and ingenious with the anxious Congress. He yielded to the fears and prejudices of the army, whenever he could do so without injury to the service; was no stickler for his own authority, but resorted to argument when it was likely to be available, and kept steadily teaching, by means of his general orders, the sentiments that should actuate men fighting for liberty. As to Congress, says Mr. Sparks:—

"These misgivings were early discovered by Washington. He respected the motive, although he could not but lament its effects. Conscious, on his own part, of the highest purity of purpose, and harboring no latent thought which was not directed to the best good of his country, if he felt wounded at this suspicion, he did not suffer it to appear in his conduct, nor to alter his opinion of the watchful guardians of the people's liberty. Example, he wisely thought, would be more regarded than complaint, more persuasive than words. If ability and courage are necessary in a commander, he soon saw, that, in his case at least, patience, forbearance, and fortitude, were not less so."

The cruel burning of Falmouth, a town of three hundred houses in Casco Bay, set the whole coast in a ferment, as the report went that the British government had ordered the destruction of all the sea-ports that were accessible. This was a mistaken idea, for the government had not at all approved the destruction of Falmouth; but the panic was great, for the time. As

a natural consequence, every eastward town, small and great, was entreating help from the commander-in-chief —each feeling its own danger the most imminent, its own claims paramount. But how could Washington spare men, arms, powder? "My readiness to serve you is circumscribed by my inability," he replies. "The immediate necessities of the army under my command require all the powder and ball that can be collected with the utmost industry and trouble. The authority of my station does not extend so far as to empower me to send a detachment of men to your assistance."

Thus quietly, and with the reticence required by the public service, did he refuse what was passionately desired and expected; and along the whole distracted coast his popularity had to take care of itself. But it was soon understood that each exposed town must provide for its own defence by its own militia, and the army was thus, for all future time, spared such onerous requisitions.

Among great matters, there were some little ones that claimed the attention of the general, as appears from the following "Order" which we copy from Sparks.

"November 5th.—As the commander-in-chief has been apprised of a design formed for the observance of that ridiculous and childish custom of burning the effigy of the Pope, he cannot help expressing his surprise, that there should be officers and soldiers in this army so void

of common sense, as not to see the impropriety of such a step at this juncture; at a time when we are soliciting and have really obtained the friendship and alliance of the people of Canada, whom we ought to consider as brethren embarked in the same cause, the defence of the general liberty of America.

"At such a juncture and in such circumstances, to be insulting their religion, is so monstrous, as not to be suffered or excused; indeed, instead of offering the most remote insult, it is our duty to address public thanks to these our brethren, as to them we are so much indebted for every late happy success over the common enemy in Canada."

A newly appointed colonel asks advice as to his new duties. Washington writes him frankly and fully, marking out the principles and manners of which he himself was so shining an example, and concluding—"These, sir, not because I think you need the advice, but because you have been condescending enough to ask it, I have presumed to give as the great outlines of your conduct."

It was by this invariable respect and tireless attention, that he acquired such immense influence, and baffled the many efforts made to disparage him and injure his estimation among the people. If he had had a spice of the demagogue in him, he would have been more condescending and less constant in his civility; and if the foundations of his popularity had been less broadly laid, its apex would not now reach the heavens.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Doings at Mount Vernon—Some fears of the enemy—Washington's confidence in his agent—Care for the poor—Mrs. Washington's journey to head-quarters—Respect of the people—Her influence—Rural tastes—Plain, generous hospitality.

But where was the good lady, all this time? How was the quiet little Virginia housewife faring, at Mount Vernon, while her husband was drilling raw recruits, pacifying jealous officers, arguing with exacting governors, throwing up defences on Charlestown neck, and firing now and then a nine-pounder at the British, though he grudged the powder, even when the shot sunk a floating battery? Whether from apathy or courage, Mrs. Washington continued to reside at Mount Vernon, undisturbed by wars or rumors of wars, until on all sides there arose general alarm lest the enemy should, by way of touching the rebel commander at the tenderest point, steal up the Potomac, that broad, silent highway, leading to the very door of his house, and make a raid upon the domain, profaning his household gods, and perhaps carrying off the presiding goddess. The gallant yeomen of Loudon County had offered to

bear her away under an escort of light-horse to a safe retreat beyond the mountains, but she declined, saying she apprehended nothing. "My father's at the helm," said the young sailor in the story; and the chief lady in the land had just such a trust in the judgment of her husband. If he had no fears for her, why should she have any for herself?

The agent at Mount Vernon, too, thought there was no danger, but wrote to Washington, "You may depend I will be watchful, and, upon the least alarm, persuade her to move."

This agent was a Washington too,—Mr. Lund Washington,—but not a relative, so far as we can discover. His employer had the most generous confidence in him. "I should do you injustice," writes he from Cambridge, in the dark and troublesome times, "were I not to acknowledge that your conduct has ever appeared to me above every thing sordid; but I offer it—(larger pay), in consideration of the great charge you have upon your hands, and my entire dependence upon your fidelity and industry. It is the greatest, indeed the only comfortable reflection I enjoy on this score, that my business is in the hands of a person concerning whose integrity I have not a doubt, and on whose care I can rely. Were it not for this, I should feel very unhappy on account of the situation of my affairs. But I am persuaded you will do for me as you would for yourself." The agent wrote two or three times a month without fail, giving the general the most minute infor-

mation as to whatever of interest happened on the plantation. Every arrival of colt or calf, every delinquency of Tom or Kitty, was duly noted. Crops and sales, visits and accidents, all were chronicled; and the commander-in-chief replied to every epistle, and remarked on every item, with a particularity that shows how dearly and distinctly the home scene was impressed on his memory, and how large a portion of his heart it engrossed. He directed the affairs of the plantation with as much decision and promptness as he could have exercised on the spot; not a field but he ordered its planting, not a broken fence or dilapidated negro-hut but was repaired under his direction.

The constant devotion of his thoughts to business and duty, enabled him to find time and place for details as well as great affairs. His mind was like a daguerreotype that can, by its truthful obedience, show now the shadow of an eyelash, now the perspective of Niagara.

But even as to home affairs, the safety of his wife and the details of economy and management were not all that occupied the thoughts of Washington, as he stood with keen, all-embracing glance, watching every movement of the enemy, on the heights about Boston. On the 26th of November, 1775, he wrote a letter to his agent, a long letter, in which he said many generous and manly things, some of which we have quoted, respecting that agent's fidelity and capacity, and then subjoins:

"Let the hospitality of the house, with respect to

the poor, be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them in idleness, and I have no objection to your giving my money in charity, to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year, when you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no objection is, that it is my desire that it should be done. You are to consider, that neither myself nor wife is now in the way to do these good offices. In all other respects, I recommend to you, and have no doubt of your observing, the greatest economy and frugality; as I suppose you know that I do not get a farthing for my services here, more than my expenses. It becomes necessary, therefore, for me to be saving at home." And this letter was copied, as he says at the close of it—"Not only to remind myself of my promises and requests, but others also, if any mischance happens to me."

Mrs. Washington had hoped to have the general home again in the autumn, but as this was now out of the question, he wrote for her to come to him, which she did, travelling the whole distance in her own carriage-and-four, escorted by her son, Mr. Custis, then newly married. Her husband wrote to his friend Joseph Reed:

"I thank you for your frequent mention of Mrs. Washington. I expect that she will be in Philadelphia about the time this letter may reach you, on her way hither.

"As she and her conducter, who I suppose will be Mr. Custis, her son, are perfect strangers to the road, the stages, and the proper place to cross Hudson's River, by all means avoiding New York, I shall be much obliged by your particular instructions and advice to her.

"I imagine, as the roads are bad and the weather cold, her stages must be short, especially as I presume her horses will be fatigued; as when they get to Philadelphia, they will have performed a journey of at least four hundred and fifty miles, my express having found her among her friends near Williamsburg, one hundred and fifty miles below my own house."

Mrs. Washington's journey took nearly a month, partly on account of the reasons here mentioned, and partly from the desire of various towns through which she passed, to show public honors to the wife of the commander-in-chief. He writes to Mr. Reed, after her arrival—"I must again express my gratitude for the attention shown to Mrs. Washington at Philadelphia.

"It cannot but be pleasing, although it did, in some measure, impede the progress of her journey."

And again. "I am so much indebted for the civilities shown to Mrs. Washington on her journey hither, that I hardly know how to acknowledge them. Some of the enclosed (all of which I beg the favor of you to put in the post-office) are directed to that end, and I shall be obliged to you for presenting my thanks to the commanding officers of the two battalions of Philadel-

phia, for the honor done to her and me, as also to any others, equally entitled."

Mrs. Washington was a woman of retiring manners and the plainest taste, and would probably have been glad to avoid these public honors; but she always received them gracefully, and was remarked for her discretion and the propriety of her replies. That her style was a little formal, may be seen by some letters and notes of hers that have been preserved in private families conspicuous at the time.

Here are two notes to Mrs. Warren:

"CAMBRIDGE, *January* 8th, 1776.

"Mrs. Washington presents her respectful compliments to Mrs. Warren, and thanks her, most cordially, for her polite inquiries, and exceeding kind offer. If the exigency of affairs in this camp should make it necessary for her to remove, she cannot but esteem it a happiness, to have so friendly an invitation as Mrs. Warren has given.

"In the meanwhile, Mrs. Washington cannot help wishing for an opportunity of showing every facility in her power to Mrs. Warren, at head-quarters, in Cambridge.

"The general begs that his best regards may be presented to Mrs. Warren, accompanied with his sincere thanks, for her favorable wishes for his honor and success; and joins in wishing Mrs. Warren, the

Speaker, and their family, every happiness that is, or can be, derived from an honorable peace."

"To Mrs. Warren, at Plymouth."

"Cambridge, *April the 2d*, 1776.

"Madam,—You may be assured, that nothing would give the general, or me, greater pleasure, than to wait upon you at dinner this day; but his time is so totally engrossed by applications from one department and another, and by his preparations to depart,—in which last, I am also concerned and busy, as indeed all the family are,—that it is not in any of our powers to accept your polite and friendly invitation. Nor will it be in my power, I am persuaded, to thank you, personally, for the polite attention you have shown me, since I came into this Province.

"I must therefore beg your acceptance of them, in this way, and at this time, and that you will be assured, that I shall hold them in grateful remembrance. I am desired by the general, to offer you his sincere thanks for your kind wishes, and to present his compliments, along with Mr. and Mrs. Custis's, and my own, to you and Colonel Warren.

"With every sentiment of esteem, I am, and shall remain to be, your much obliged friend and humble servant.

"To Mrs. Warren at Watertown."

Mrs. Washington's arrival in camp was the signal

for that of other officers' wives, and caused a great change in the face of things. Even the general had become rather unpopular with some members of the Massachusetts General Court, because he seemed unsocial, and more absorbed in the great concerns of his office than was consistent with the attentions due to those important functionaries. But the arrival of Mrs. Washington in the "chariot-and-four," and its gay "scarlet and white liveries," was like a gleam of sunshine, physical and moral, and soon set all right again. She took her place as head of something like a little vice-regal court, whose invitations were accepted as honors, and whose personal civilities of speech and manner smoothed the most frowning brows and silenced the most inimical tongues—of those who received these favors. As to those who did not, we have no record of their opinions; but it would be safe to conclude that they did not entertain an equally high opinion of General Washington's character and talents, or of Mrs. Washington's affability and simple grace of manner, with that of the favored few.

The lady-in-chief had been accustomed to entertain company, and knew how to do it well. She fulfilled the Bible idea of a good wife, looking well to the ways of her household. Her dinners were not perhaps exactly in the French taste, but she always offered the best that could be had, and never considered it beneath her dignity to attend to all the duties belonging to a plain but liberal hospitality.

The company at head-quarters spoke well of her conversation, which, although not abundant, was yet pertinent and sensible. She could dexterously avoid a political point when any guest was indiscreet enough to set a trap for her opinion, and she was equally capable of giving advice to the younger ladies, whom she always exhorted to industry and frugality. Knitting was her favorite occupation, at least when in company; so much so, that a lady who saw her almost daily during the first Presidency, says she does not remember ever having seen her, sitting at home, without the inevitable four needles clicking in her fingers. Her maid Oney was always at her side, and a lady who saw her often, still remembers, that when about to leave the room or receive company, she would hand the knitting to the servant, saying, "There, Oney; tote* that away."

With all her housewifely graces, Mrs. Washington was by no means indifferent to the advantages of splendor on proper occasions. We have seen how gay and abundant must have been her wardrobe when she was a young wife at Mount Vernon, and numerous pincushions and thread-cases,† even now floating about the community, left as heir-looms or laid up in lavender for favorite granddaughters, by ladies her contemporaries, testify to the richness and variety of her costume du-

* A Southern expression, meaning *carry*.

† One of them, now before the writer, is part of a train of rich satin, crimson-striped with white in wreaths and bars, worn, as we are told, "over a petticoat of silver tissue."

ring the long period when all eyes were upon her, as she stood in the reflected light of the Sun of Liberty.

Mrs. Grant of Laggan, on seeing Sir Walter and Lady Scott together in company, at a time when the popularity of Marmion had, as Scott said himself, given him "such a *breeze*" (which seems to be Scotch for lift, or elation), that he was nearly off his feet,—said, wittily,—"Mr. Scott always seems to me like a glass, through which the rays of admiration pass without sensibly affecting it; but the bit of paper that lies beside it will presently be in a blaze—and no wonder!"

But Mrs. Washington, a more solid and serious character than Lady Scott, seems wholly to have escaped the elation which acts so dangerously upon the weaker subject in some cases. Far from exulting in her great station, her sole desire, from first to last, was to get back to Mount Vernon, which she never quitted without regret. If not "born to love pigs and chickens," she was eminently fitted for quiet, rural life; and as to happiness, her highest ideal of it evidently pictured the general and herself seated by a cosey fire, Darby and Joan fashion, or snugly stowed in the family chariot, jolting along a Virginia road, to dine with some neighbor, or attend Pohick church. If we were to give our private opinion, we should say that Mrs. Martha Custis Washington, with her large fortune, her strong domestic tastes and affections, and her dutiful commonsense character, exercised her full share of influence over the commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States

of America. She had a very decided way of speaking, when she did speak, and as she never meddled in public affairs, we can easily imagine the general letting her have pretty much her own way in every thing else.

Miss Bremer was told this anecdote:

"A guest at Mount Vernon happened to sleep in a room adjoining that occupied by the President and his lady. Late in the evening, when people had retired to their various chambers, he heard the lady delivering a very animated lecture to her lord and master upon something which he had done, that she thought should have been done differently. To all this he listened in the profoundest silence; and when she too was silent, he opened his lips and spoke, 'Now good sleep to you, my dear.'"

CHAPTER XXIV.

Distress of Boston—Anxieties on both sides—Both actuated by British spirit—Arrogance of the invaders—Burlesque comedy outdone by General Putnam—Failure of Lord Percy—Resolve to evacuate the town—Hurried retreat—Triumphal entry of American troops.

During the occupation of Boston by the British, the town and its environs presented a most gloomy and distressing aspect. War bristled every where. Disease and poverty stalked over ruin and devastation. The houses occupied by an insolent soldiery; places of worship profaned with reckless indecency; trade at a stand, and fear and sorrow written on every honest face, a spectator might have thought the love of liberty on the point of giving way to that of life, and a struggle for man's dearest rights about to be crushed under force and rapine irresistible.

But when the truth came to be known, it was ascertained that under all the outward show of insolence and bravado, the enemy felt at this very time a discouragement which, had it been suspected, would have saved Washington and other patriotic leaders many a sleepless night. The watchful and persevering resist-

ance of the colonists to every attempt at encroachment, and the skill with which Washington kept the British army at bay, and forced it to remain within its lines, nobody on the other side had been prepared for. Accustomed to war with people unlike themselves, the British did not know how formidable was their own spirit until they had to contend against it. French impetuosity, or German phlegm they might have coped with; but British determination tired them out, and disgusted them with a service in which victory was by no means sure to bring glory, while defeat would entail a double measure of disgrace. The regiments were undergoing constant change, and some of those which had been held longest to this harassing duty, had been sent home to avoid the ill consequences of their growing discontents.

If the Americans, poorly equipped, and longing to be at home and attending to their destitute families, desired to bring the contest to a close by some decisive action, no less did their enemies, worn out and dispirited, look for war to the knife as a relief from the tedium of confinement and the discredit of inaction. "Battle! battle!" was the dreadful cry, and when this cry arises at once from two hostile armies, the dogs of war are not far off, and havoc and destruction follow at no lingering pace.

But in our case a kind Providence was pleased to avert the most horrid aspect of war, and to spare our

country the loss and anguish that would have resulted from a bloody battle between forces in such a temper.

It was just at this juncture, and doubtless with a view of keeping up the spirits of officers and men, weary and impatient as they were of their forced sojourn in Boston, that a burlesque comedy, written, it is said, by General Burgoyne, was prepared for the stage, and played by an amateur company, in a theatre which the officers had erected for such amusements. The piece was called "The Blockade of Boston;" and its object was to pour every species of contempt upon the Yankee rebels, while the valor, the spirit, and the elegance of British soldiers was displayed to the greatest advantage. General Washington, of course, figured in the plot, and he was represented as a great awkward lout, with a wig, an old rusty sword, and a firelock seven or eight feet long. The thing was going on finely, and roars of laughter at the rusticity, meanness and cowardice of the rebels shook the house at every sally of the author's wit.

Meanwhile General Putnam, acting a drama of real life, was sending a party to surprise the British guard on Cobble Hill. This was at once announced at the theatre, where both officers and men were assembled, but all thought the words a part of the play, till General Howe, who was present, gave the order—"Officers! to your alarm posts!"

This caused a general scamper, with the usual ac-

companiments of screaming and fainting ladies, and every circumstance of panic.*

The morning dawned on new works thrown up by the rebels; and the celerity and secrecy with which these things were accomplished, discouraged the enemy much more than any thing formidable in the works themselves. It was the skill and spirit of the people, under so many disadvantages, that rendered the task of subduing them less and less hopeful, and every day's operations brought the struggle faster and faster to a close. "The rebels have done more in a single night," said General Howe, "than my whole army would have done in a month." Another observed, "It must have been the employment of at least twelve thousand men." One of the officers wrote home, speaking of the new works, "They were raised with an expedition equal to that of the Genii belonging to Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp."

The truth was, General Washington, ever on the alert, and having in vain attempted a bombardment,—which had proved more destructive to his own men than to the enemy, owing to the bad quality of the artillery,—had managed, in a single night, to throw up a fort on Dorchester Hill, commanding the enemy's position to such an extent as to occasion great consternation in the British camp, when the rising sun disclosed what had been accomplished under the veil of darkness. The admiral at once giving notice, that unless the

* Irving, vol. II. –p. 176.

Americans were dislodged from the new redoubt, his majesty's fleet must immediately evacuate the harbor, Lord Howe sent some three thousand men, with Lord Percy at their head, to attempt the operation. The greatest interest was felt, and all Boston was watching the result. The surrounding heights were crowded with spectators, anticipating a repetition of the scenes of Bunker Hill. When Washington came upon the ground, he addressed the soldiers, and said solemnly, "Remember this is the fifth of March," thus recalling to their memory the Boston massacre of 1770.

But a storm of rain and wind, which came up in the afternoon, frustrated the plans of both parties. Washington, who had expected a battle, felt disappointed that the issue was again delayed. "The event," he says, "must, I think, have been fortunate, and nothing less than success and victory on our side, as our officers and men appeared impatient for the appeal, and to possess the most animated sentiments and determined resolution."

There was but a single alternative now left to the British commander. He must drive the Americans from the works, or evacuate the town. He called a council of war, who deliberated anxiously upon the course to be pursued, but in the end concluded to sacrifice pride to prudence, and relinquish Boston, with whatever mortification, to the despised rebels, who showed such a stubborn determination to possess it.

The unhappy inhabitants feared that their town

would be burnt by the retreating invaders; but General Howe sent unofficial word to General Washington, that on condition his troops were suffered to depart unmolested, he would agree to spare the town. On the observance of this compact, hung its fate and that of its inhabitants, who were trembling at once for life and living. The noble John Hancock, who had great possessions, urged Washington to do whatever seemed best for the common cause, although he himself might be the greatest loser. But Washington never willingly, or for the sake of revenge, caused unnecessary loss or distress, and not a shot was fired after the flying enemy, although it was hard to refrain, especially as Lord Howe had by no means succeeded—if indeed he made the effort—in preventing very serious injury to persons and property. The soldiers broke open many stores, which they despoiled of their contents; seized and robbed vessels at the wharves; defaced the furniture in private houses, and did what other harm they dared, although a general conflagration was prevented.

The British spiked their largest cannon, and attempted by some other precautions to avoid strengthening the hands of their enemies, but the retreat was made with every mark of the greatest precipitation. The barracks at Bunker Hill, and many other wooden buildings, were left standing, and there was no attempt to destroy any considerable portion of the British lines of defence. All was hurry and confusion; and to get away from a spot which had been the scene only of

baffled designs and disgraceful arrogance, seemed the sole care. When our soldiers took possession of the fort on Bunker Hill, they found wooden sentinels left on guard there, in order to cover the retreat of the garrison.

It was on the 17th of March, 1776, that the British forces, in seventy-eight ships and transports, finally evacuated Boston, leaving behind them some thirty thousand pounds worth of stores, and a quantity of cannon and other munitions of war. The small-pox being at that time in the town, Washington sent General Putnam, with a thousand picked men who had all had the disease, to take possession, deferring his own public and formal entrance until the next day, when he was received with every demonstration of joy that remained in the power of the worn and harassed town. Much damage had, as has been mentioned, been suffered during the occupation of it; one of the most venerated churches had been used for stabling horses, and another torn down and burnt for fuel, besides three hundred wooden houses used for the same purpose. But all was now forgotten in the general satisfaction and gratitude, and public prayers and thanksgivings took the place of alarms and insults. Washington's merit was the theme of every tongue, and the thought of every heart. No one now questioned the skill and patience which had averted the most terrific and destructive aspect of war; for those who had criticised every step of the process, could not deny the excel-

lence of the result, or its justification of the means employed.

Congress was profuse in its acknowledgments, and as an enduring memorial of its approbation, ordered a gold medal to be struck, on one side of which was an emblematical device, and on the other a head of Washington, surrounded by a complimentary inscription.

Washington accepted the praise and its commemoration with his usual self respecting modesty; declaring, however, that he had only done his duty, and that he desired no other reward than that of his own conscience, and the feeling that his services might have contributed to "the establishment of freedom and peace upon a permanent foundation."

He concludes his reply to the address of the General Assembly of Massachusetts:—

"May that Being who is powerful to save, and in whose hands is the fate of nations, look down with an eye of tender pity and compassion upon the whole of the United Colonies; may he continue to smile upon their counsels and arms, and crown them with success, whilst employed in the cause of virtue and mankind. May this distressed colony and its capital, and every part of this wide extended continent, through His divine favor, be restored to more than their former lustre and once happy state, and have peace, liberty, and safety secured upon a solid, permanent, and lasting foundation."

The enemy once huddled into his ships, the next

question was—"What is his destination?" Every point of the coast expected an attack. Washington believed New York to be the most probable point, and by the time the British were afloat, had made all his arrangements for transferring twelve regiments of the Continental forces thither. His agent at Mount Vernon made every preparation for their reception there, as the Potomac is navigable for the largest ships, and the idea of Washington's possessions being a probable object of attack was still prevailing.

Mr. Lund Washington writes to his employer:

"Alexandria is much alarmed, and indeed the whole neighborhood. The women and children are leaving the town, and stowing themselves in every hut they can find, out of the reach of the enemy's cannon. Every cart, wagon, and pack-horse that can be got, is employed. The militia are all up, but not in arms, for indeed they have none, or at least very few. I could wish, if we are to have our neighborhood invaded, that they would send a tender or two among us, that we might see how the people would behave on the occasion.

"They say they are determined to fight. I am about packing up your china and glass in barrels, and other things into chests, trunks, and bundles, and I shall be able at the shortest notice to remove them out of the way. I fear the destruction will be great, although the best care has been taken. Every body I see tells me, that if the people could have notice, they would imme-

diately come and defend your property, so long as they have life."

Those called government-men, in Boston, to the amount of one thousand, fled with the enemy, fearing the vengeance of the victorious army. Judging from Washington's expressions, they did wisely, for his indignation burns hot against them.

"One or two of them," he says in a letter to his brother, "have done, what a great number ought to have done long ago, committed suicide. By all accounts, there never existed a more miserable set of beings, than these wretched creatures now are. Taught to believe that the power of Great Britain was superior to all opposition, and, if not, that foreign aid was at hand, they were even higher and more insulting in their opposition than the regulars. When the order issued, therefore, for embarking the troops in Boston, no electric shock, no sudden explosion of thunder, in a word, not the last trump, could have struck them with greater consternation. They were at their wits' end, and, conscious of their black ingratitude, they chose to commit themselves, in the manner I have above described, to the mercy of the waves at a tempestuous season, rather than meet their offended countrymen."

Washington thus sums up his difficulties, in the same letter to his brother John Augustine:

"I believe I may with great truth affirm, that no man perhaps, since the first institution of armies, ever commanded one under more difficult circumstances

than I have done. To enumerate the particulars would fill a volume.

"Many of my difficulties and distresses were of so peculiar a cast, that, in order to conceal them from the enemy, I was obliged to conceal them from my friends, and indeed from my own army, thereby subjecting my conduct to interpretations unfavorable to my character, especially by those at a distance, who could not in the smallest degree be acquainted with the springs that governed it. I am happy, however, to find, and to hear from different quarters, that my reputation stands fair, that my conduct hitherto has given universal satisfaction. The addresses which I have received, and which I suppose will be published, from the General Court of this colony and from the selectmen of Boston, upon the evacuation of the town, and my approaching departure from the colony, exhibit a pleasing testimony of their approbation of my conduct, and of their personal regard, which I have found in various other instances, and which, in retirement, will afford many comfortable reflections."

An amusing letter of the same period from General Lee to Washington, shows at once the character of that accomplished, impetuous and imprudent soldier, and the mystery that hung over the intentions of the British.

"I most sincerely congratulate you, I congratulate the public, on the great and glorious event, your possession of Boston. It will be a most bright page in the annals of America, and a most abominably black

one in those of the beldam Britain. Go on, my dear general, crown yourself with glory, and establish the liberties and lustre of your country on a foundation more permanent than the Capitol Rock.

"My situation is just as I expected. I am afraid I shall make a shabby figure, without any real demerits of my own. I am like a dog in a dancing school. I know not where to turn myself, where to fix myself. The circumstances of the country intersected by navigable rivers, the uncertainty of the enemy's design and motions, who can fly in an instant to any spot they choose, with their canvas wings, throw me, and would throw Julius Cæsar, into this inevitable dilemma. I may possibly be in the north, when, as Richard says, I should serve my sovereign in the west. I can only act from surmise, and I have a very good chance of surmising wrong. I am sorry to grate your ears with a truth, but must at all events assure you, that the Provincial Congress of New York are angels of decision, when compared with your countrymen, the Committee of Safety assembled at Williamsburg. Page, Lee, Mercer, and Payne are indeed exceptions; but from Pendleton, Bland, the Treasurer, and company, *libera nos, Domine.*"

General Lee stood high in Washington's esteem at this time, though the chief in a measure foresaw the difficulty that would arise from his peculiarities. He says of him, "He is the first officer, in knowledge and experience, we have in the whole army. He is

zealously attached to the cause, honest and well-meaning, but rather fickle and violent, I fear, in his temper."

Washington seems to have replied to every appeal made to him by prisoners of war, in the kindest tone. As one of many letters of this kind take the following:

"To CAPTAIN SAMUEL MCKAY.

"NEW HAVEN, 11*th April*, 1776.

"SIR,—I received yours of the 9th instant, and could wish that it was in my power, consistently with the duty I owe my country, to grant you the relief you desire. I have made repeated applications to General Howe for an exchange of prisoners, but he has not thought proper to return me any answer. It has been in his power to set you at liberty; and if you are still continued a prisoner, the blame must lie entirely upon him.

"The situation of your family is indeed distressing; but such is the event of war; it is far from being singular. The brave Colonel Allen, an officer of rank, has been torn from his dearest connections, sent to England in irons, and is now confined to the most servile drudgery, on board one of the king's ships.

"Your treatment, sir, and that of the other officers taken in arms against the liberties of America, has been very different; for the truth of this I appeal to your own feelings.

"Whenever it is in my power to release you by a mutual exchange, I shall do it with the greatest pleasure; and am, sir, your most obedient servant."

CHAPTER XXV.

Transfer of the troops to New York—Difficulties there—Machinations of the Tories—British head-quarters on Staten Island—Declaration of Independence—Letter to "George Washington, Esq."—Battle of Long Island—Dreadful loss—Retreat across the East River.

THE position of the army at New York, at which place it arrived on the 13th of April, presented no fewer difficulties to the commander-in-chief than his late position had done, and he was obliged to enter at once into warm discussions with the civil authorities there. But his prudence, and the respect with which he invariably treated those authorities wherever he went, soon conciliated them and secured their co-operation.

The city and vicinity abounded with those who favored the enemy as far as they dared, and Governor Tryon was the centre of a secret faction, determined to accomplish by treachery what they had not present means to attempt openly. Congress was undecided and timid, some of its members still expecting and hoping for a reconciliation with Great Britain. Washington, fully aware of all these unhappy influences, set himself at work vigorously to bring them to light and to crush trea-

son in its beginnings. Upon his representations suspected persons were taken in hand by the civil power, and many were disarmed while others were imprisoned. In the course of these investigations, it was discovered that part of the general's guards were traitors, and that there was a plot on foot to carry off Washington himself and deliver him to the enemy.

The British forces were collecting in the harbor of New York, and General Howe had established his head-quarters on Staten Island, at different parts of which some ten thousand men were posted, when Washington received from Congress the Declaration of Independence, which was on the evening of the same day read to the troops, who were paraded for the purpose. This decisive step raised the spirits of all, and the soldiers rent the air with acclamations.

The general took the opportunity, in the orders for the day, to impress upon them anew the responsibility that rested with them, adding, "The peace and safety of the country depend, under God, solely on the success of our arms."

Military preparations went on, on both sides, through the summer. General Howe's forces, which had increased to about twenty-five thousand men, far outnumbered those of Washington, which were posted in New York and on Long Island.

On the 14th of July, Admiral Lord Howe, who had arrived with a numerous and powerful fleet to co-operate with his brother, the general, sent a flag to Wash-

ington, with a letter directed to "George Washington, Esq." Colonel Reed answered, by the general's order, that there was no such person known in the army. The officer who brought the letter was very anxious to have it received, and hinted that it contained matter of great importance, Lord Howe having great powers from his government, etc.; all which was of no avail, and the letter was returned. After the boat had started, it was put back, the bearer of the letter desiring to know by what title Mr. Washington chose to be addressed. Colonel Reed replied that General Washington's station was well known, and Lord Howe could certainly be at no loss as to the proper address.

The officer lingered and urged, but the decision was firm, and he departed as he came. Lord Howe now sent to inquire whether his adjutant-general, Colonel Paterson, could be admitted to an interview with General Washington; this was granted, and the British colonel was ushered by Colonel Reed and Colonel Wells into the presence of the commander-in-chief, who received him in grand military array, with his officers and guards about him, and whatever else could add to his own native dignity that which belonged to his high station. Colonel Paterson addressed him with great respect, using the title of Your Excellency, but still withholding the required title of General, although he was the bearer of another letter, directed George Washington, Esq., &c., &c., &c. Washington must have smiled inwardly at this childish expedient,

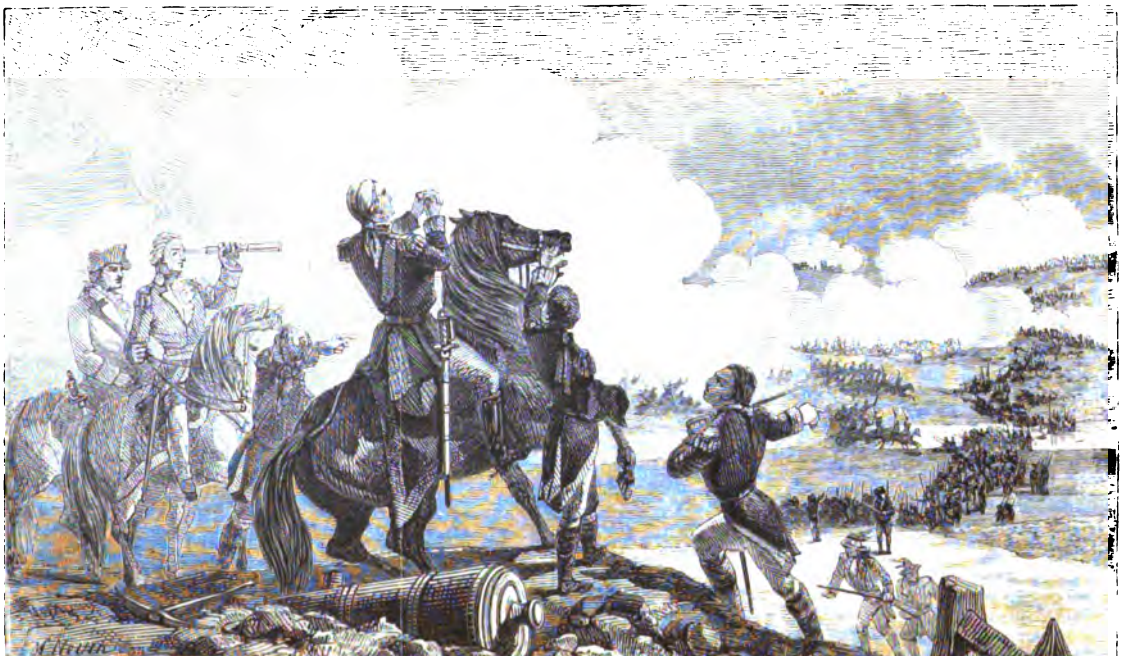
but he replied with his usual gravity and decision, that the point remained untouched; "That etc., etc.," which meant "every thing," according to the colonel's pleaded reason, meant also nothing, and did not change the case at all.

Colonel Paterson then endeavored to communicate, as well as he could in the course of a desultory conversation, the purport of the letter. Washington replied, that as far as he could understand, Lord Howe's power extended only to granting *pardons*, and as Americans battling for their rights required no pardons, there was little use in arguing the matter. So the emissary returned as he came, having seen the commander-in-chief, and whatever he had passed going and coming, the usual ceremony of blindfolding having been dispensed with in his case.

Congress highly approved the conduct of Washington in this matter, and recommended it as an example to any or all the officers who might be placed in similar situations.

After many false alarms, it was ascertained that the enemy had landed on Long Island, at a point between the Narrows and Sandy Hook.

About three o'clock on the 27th of August, the British were in motion, and before long the battle began; Lords Percy and Cornwallis, with Sir Henry Clinton, commanding on the British side, and General Sullivan and Lord Stirling on the American. The issue of the day was any thing but fortunate for the Conti-



Washington at the Battle of Long Island.

nentals, who lost, in killed, wounded and taken prisoner, about eleven hundred men.

The British force was at least fifteen thousand strong, well furnished with artillery; while the Americans mustered only about five thousand, poorly enough provided in all respects, and without even a single company of cavalry. Washington, stationed on a hill, swept the whole field with his telescope, and watched the result with breathless anxiety. From what he saw, he anticipated the immediate surrender of Stirling and his troops. But when he saw that instead of retreat or surrender, Stirling attacked Lord Cornwallis under the most desperate disadvantage, he wrung his hands in agony at the sight. "Good God," said he, "what brave fellows must I this day lose!"* His worst anticipations were realized.

Every thing had gone against his troops, and nothing had been gained but experience.

That night was one of cruel anxiety and suffering; the men weary, sick and wounded; the commander-in-chief going about among them, to say whatever could be said by way of consolation and encouragement, and to make what preparations could be made for the struggle of the morrow.

He had witnessed the rout and slaughter of his troops with the keenest anguish; it was now his office to inspirit them for a new effort, against superior force, and in the face of a victorious enemy.

* Irving, Vol. II, p. 824.

The sentries of the two armies could hear each other speak, so near had the lines approached.

The dawn of day brought a violent rain, which prevented the enemy from going on with the projected intrenchments, and nothing more than skirmishing was attempted through the day.

The next morning there was a dense fog. When this was, for a moment, lifted by a light breeze, the British fleet was observed to be in a sort of bustle, boats passing to and fro, as if some movement was in contemplation. Those who were on the look-out conjectured that the fleet was about to come up and anchor in the East River, thus checkmating the army on Long Island.

Washington called a council of war, and it was at once decided that the troops must if possible be taken back to New York under cover of the night. Nine thousand men, with baggage and artillery, to be spirited away from the very front of a victorious army, capable of annihilating them if the alarm should be given!

But it was done under the eye of Washington, who was at the ferry during the entire operation. The fog favored the withdrawal of the men from the lines, and the whole body was at last embarked and ferried over, just before daybreak, so that the last boats passed in full view of the enemy. Washington crossed the river with the very latest. This retreat was one of his greatest achievements. At no period of the war, probably,

did he suffer more intense anxiety, or undergo more exertion, than on the occasion of this early and disastrous defeat; and in no subsequent emergency did he find a better opportunity for the display of his peculiar talents.

It is almost the only time when he has to apologize to the President of Congress for not having written immediately on the occurrence of any thing important.

He says in the despatch of August 31st, four days after the battle:—

"New York, 31*st August*, 1776.

"Sir,—Inclination as well as duty would have induced me to give Congress the earliest information of my removal, and that of the troops, from Long Island and its dependencies to this city, the night before last; but the extreme fatigue which myself and family have undergone, as much from the weather since, as the engagement on the 27th, rendered me and them entirely unfit to take pen in hand. Since Monday scarce any of us have been out of the lines, till our passage across the East River was effected yesterday morning; and, for forty-eight hours preceding that, I had hardly been off my horse, and never closed my eyes; so that I was quite unfit to write or dictate till this morning."

The letter goes on to state particulars, in a tone of

sadness which shows that the aspect of things was at the moment very discouraging. He writes again:—

"*September 2d*, 1776.

"SIR,—As my intelligence of late has been rather unfavorable, and would be received with anxiety and concern, peculiarly happy should I esteem myself, were it in my power at this time to transmit such information to Congress, as would be more pleasing and agreeable to their wishes; but, unfortunately for me, unfortunately for them, it is not. Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained on the 27th ultimo, has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair."

It very soon became evident that the enemy meant, with the aid of their naval force, to enclose the island of New York, cut off communication with the country, and thus force the Americans to a surrender.

The question was agitated whether it would be better to burn the town or to evacuate it, and the inhabitants had the agreeable consciousness that as two-thirds, at least, of their number were supposed to be tories, the settlement of the course to be pursued would be very little influenced by consideration for them or their property. The decision was, however, favorable so far as the destruction of the town was concerned. Congress forbade all injury to it, hoping it would ultimately

be restored, even although it should for a time be used by the enemy for his advantage.

The inhabitants, however, suffered continual alarms from the cannonading by the ships-of-war that lay in both rivers and in the bay. A private letter quoted by Mr. Irving, gives a vivid picture of the state of things:—

"On the 13th of September, just after dinner, three frigates and a forty-gun-ship sailed up the East River with a gentle breeze, toward Hell Gate, and kept up an incessant fire, assisted by the cannon at Governor's Island. The batteries of the city returned the ships the like salutation.

"Three men agape, idle spectators, had the misfortune of being killed by one cannon ball. One shot struck within six feet of General Washington, as he was on horseback, riding into the fort."

With all this, the commander-in-chief had the mortification of knowing that he could not depend upon all his soldiers.

He writes, Sept. 9, 1776:—

"I fear the militia, by leaving their homes so suddenly, and in a manner unprepared for a long absence, have sustained some injury. To this cause I must impute their impatience to return, &c. Their want of discipline, the indulgencies they claim and have been allowed, their unwillingness—I may add refusal—to submit to that regularity and order essential in every army, have been of pernicious tendency, and occa-

sioned a good deal of confusion and disorder. As to drafting seamen from the Continental regiments, it cannot be done; as their numbers have been reduced so low already that some of them have hardly any thing left but the name. Besides, I must depend chiefly upon them for a successful opposition to the enemy."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Discouragement of the army—General Howe threatens New York—Talk of burning the city—Washington fortifies Harlem—Cowardice of some of the troops there—Retreat to White Plains—Illiterate officers—Disaster there—Capture of Fort Washington—Temporary defection of Colonel Reed.

The terrible result of the battle of Long Island could not be forgotten in the splendor of the retreat, by which all that human skill and effort could do had been done to retrieve it. The army felt the defeat and the slaughter of their brave comrades with a keenness unknown to veterans in the art of war, who learn to regard fellow-soldiers more in the light of machines and less in that of fellow-citizens. Washington wrote to Congress that the minds of the troops were filled with apprehension and despair. The militia, in particular, deserted by hundreds, and their example still further disaffected the other part of the army. He adds that the number of troops fit for duty is less than twenty thousand, and it proved scarcely more than eleven thousand.

General Howe, with a superior force, now theatening New York, it became Washington's care to devise means

for evacuating the city which he had not means to defend. To drive General Howe to a bombardment, to which the city was completely open, would be but wanton sacrifice of life and property, since the result could be no other. Some proposed the voluntary destruction of the city, to prevent the enemy from using it as winter-quarters, and this was the more easily contemplated as two thirds of the property in it was estimated to belong to the tories, or adherents of the British government.

But milder and more prudent counsels prevailed, and it was finally resolved to leave the town and retire to the rocky heights north of it, on the upper part of the island, making that position as strong as possible, with a view to the prevention of the enemy's movements on either the North or the East River.

On the 15th of September, the enemy, from his ships, attacked Kipp's Bay on the East River. The troops stationed there fled in the greatest confusion, notwithstanding every effort on the part of their officers. General Washington, who was at Harlem when the firing commenced, galloped over to the scene as fast as his horse could carry him, and there to his infinite mortification and distress, found all his fears of the instability of the army confirmed by the dastardly behavior of these men. Here his native passion flashed out. He rode furiously up in the face of the flying troops, shouted to them, ordered them to return and face the enemy with him, and when he found all useless, drew his sword and

threatened them, snapped his pistols in their faces, and at last halted his horse within the fire of the enemy, as if courting death to relieve him of the sense of dishonor. Seeing him thus transported out of himself, and in the very teeth of danger, one of his aids seized the bridle of his horse, and forced him from the spot.

He never showed any sense of personal danger, but his feelings when disgrace occurred were of the keenest kind. He wrote to his brother of this affair, speaking of the desertions and other discouraging circumstances, —"It is not in the power of words to describe the task I have to perform. Fifty thousand pounds would not induce me again to undergo what I have done."

In a letter to the President of Congress, written, as he says at the beginning, in hours borrowed from those allotted to sleep, Washington thus describes the situation of the army.

"As the war must be carried on systematically, and to do it you must have good officers, there are no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your army upon a permanent footing, and giving your officers good pay. This will induce gentlemen and men of character to engage; and, till the bulk of your officers is composed of such persons as are actuated by principles of honor and a spirit of enterprise, you have little to expect from them. They ought to have such allowances, as will enable them to live like and support the character of gentlemen, and not be driven by a scanty pittance to the low and dirty arts which many of them

practise, to filch from the public more than the difference of pay would amount to, upon an ample allowance. Besides, something is due to the man who puts his life in your hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the sweets of domestic enjoyment.

"But while the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men; while those men consider and treat him as an equal, and, in the character of an officer, regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd, no order or discipline can prevail; nor will the officer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.

"Of late a practice prevails of the most alarming nature, and which will, if it cannot be checked, prove fatal to both the country and the army; I mean the infamous practice of plundering. For under the idea of tory property, or property that may fall into the hands of the enemy, no man is secure in his effects, and scarcely in his person. In order to get at them, we have several instances of people being frightened out of their houses, under pretence of those houses being ordered to be burnt, and this is done with a view of seizing the goods; nay, in order that the villainy may be more effectually concealed, some houses have actually been burnt, to cover the theft. I have, with some others, used my utmost endeavors to stop this horrid practice; but under the present lust after plunder, and want of laws to punish offenders, I might almost as well attempt to move Mount Atlas. I have ordered in-

stant corporal punishment upon every man, who passes our lines, or is seen with plunder, that the offenders may be punished for disobedience of orders; and I enclose to you the proceedings of a court-martial held upon an officer, who, with a party of men, had robbed a house a little beyond our lines, of a number of valuable goods, among which (to show that nothing escaped) were four large pier looking-glasses, women's clothes, and other articles, which, one would think, could be of no earthly use to him. He was met by a major of brigade, who ordered him to return the goods, as taken contrary to general orders, which he not only refused to do, but drew up his party, and swore he would defend them at the hazard of his life; on which I ordered him to be arrested, tried for plundering, disobedience of orders, and mutiny.

"An army formed of good officers moves like clockwork; but there is no situation upon earth less enviable, or more distressing, than that person's, who is at the head of troops regardless of order and discipline, and unprovided with almost every necessary. In a word, the difficulties which have for ever surrounded me since I have been in the service, and kept my mind constantly upon the stretch, the wounds which my feelings as an officer have received by a thousand things that have happened contrary to my expectations and wishes; the effect of my own conduct, and present appearance of things, so little pleasing to myself, as to render it a matter of no surprise to me if I should stand

capitally censured by Congress; added to a consciousness of my inability to govern an army composed of such discordant parts, and under such a variety of intricate and perplexing circumstances, induce not only a belief, but a thorough conviction in my mind, that it will be impossible, unless there is a thorough change in our military system, for me to conduct matters in such a manner as to give satisfaction to the public, which is all the recompense I aim at, or ever wished for."

These extracts are introduced to give in the most concise form, some idea of the state of things, and the difficulties over which the patience, courage and wisdom of our patriot fathers triumphed.

There was a small success at Harlem on the 16th of September, which served in some trifling degree to inspirit the troops; but two of their best officers, Colonel Knowlton and Major Leitch were killed there, and fifty others killed and wounded. Washington went on fortifying Harlem Heights, and Lord Howe forbore further attack for several weeks, waiting for the arrival of some troops which he expected. When the enemy sailed up the East River and threatened the works from that side, while other ships-of-war lay in the Hudson ready to co-operate with them, General Washington drew his army further north, and formed a camp on the west side of Bronx River, at White Plains.

While he is awaiting the attack of Sir William Howe, (lately knighted by Geo. III.), let us look at a specimen of the cultivation of some of the officers on whose co-

operation he was to depend in those times of emergency. We may hope that few of them were so totally uneducated as this writer.

* "HEAD-QUARTERS, KING'S BRIDGE, } *Aug.* 17, 1776.—POROL, ALBANY.

"C. S. BEDFORD.

"The Major of Briggade will attend Daly att 12 o'Clock for orders.—there puntially to meet and make there Weekly Returns at orderly time on saturdays the Poroles and Counter-signs Will be Delivered to them Sealed which they are not to Open untill a Retreet Beating when they ar to communicait to the Field Officer of their Respective Ridgments. The Soldiers are not to Be out of their Respective Quarters after Tattue Beate,

as theire is the Greatest probbility that the troops May Soon be Cauled to Action and the Major General Desires That the Commanding officers of the Ridgments and Corps will take affectual Care that Each man has his Complement of Ammunition and that arme be frequantly inspected the Men of Duty Should be Daly Exercised and the Recrutes be Carefully Instructed in the Different parts of their Duty."

"HEAD-QUARTERS, KING'S BRIDGE, } 10*th Aug.*, 1776.

("*Porole* Coneticut Counter-sign Luddingham) Complaint has Been made of fields and Gardains Being Pil-

* Copied from a manuscript order book, belonging to Mr. Tomlinson, who possesses a large collection of Revolutionary Papers, "*Porol*" stands for parole, and "C. S." for countersign.

ford Moroding Pilffording are a Disgrace to War my and on Restrained an army becomes a Scourge Instead of a Protection to the Inhabitents and is Commonly followed With the implication of Undun Business. The Major General Doth therefore most Strictly forbid all Such unjust practice and offenders if Apprehended will be severely Punished the Inhabitents are to be treated with Gentealness and their affections one By an Orderly & solder Like Behavour.)

"The Firing of Guns Without Special occation is Strectly forbiden in this Campt and it will not be amiss to Inform this Division that his Exilintsy General Washington has Given orders that Six Coppers for Each Cartridge which Shall be waisted shall be Stoped out of the pay of Shuch Soldier as shall offend in this Particular the Cartridges are to be Drawn if possible and Such as Cannot are to be Discharged under the Direction of an officer Altogether which will prevent and on Soldier Like poping of Guns Around the Camp."

A good deal more of the same sort gives us but a poor idea of the intelligence of the force on whom Washington was to depend, when, on the 28th of October, the British army came in view, within two miles of Washington's camp. Severe skirmishes ensued, and in the end the enemy drove our troops from the works, and would have pursued their advantage but for a very heavy rain which rendered military movements impossible.

General Washington availed himself of the delay to withdraw his men to a more secure position, and this was accomplished so well, that the enemy never suspected it until they found it past counteracting. General Howe now despaired of a battle, and turned his attention to the capture of Fort Washington, on the Hudson, which with its garrison of three thousand men, and a great quantity of stores, fell into the hands of the enemy. This was the most terrible blow we had yet sustained, and the British feeling of triumph knew no bounds, decided successes on their part having been thus far very rare.

Again on this occasion Washington, who viewed the fight from the opposite shore of the Hudson, is said to have wrung his hands and wept as he saw our poor fellows cut down by the Hessians. He had disapproved of attempting to hold this post, and had written thus to General Greene, at Fort Lee, who disagreed with him in the opinion that it was best to dismantle and abandon it. "If we cannot prevent vessels from passing up, and the enemy are possessed of the surrounding country, what valuable purpose can it answer to attempt to hold a post, from which the expected benefit cannot be had? I am therefore inclined to think, that it will not be prudent to hazard the stores and men at Mount Washington; but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders, as to evacuating Mount Washington, as you may judge best."

General Lee coolly observed on hearing of the ter-

rible loss,—"Oh, general! why would you be over-persuaded by men of inferior judgment to your own? It was a cursed affair."

Washington retreated into New Jersey. General Howe followed him closely. When our army reached New Brunswick, it amounted to only about four thousand men, afterwards reduced by sickness and desertion, to three thousand; with these Washington retreated to Trenton. The enemy and the tories grew bolder and more insolent every day, while the patriotic were more and more depressed, though none the less determined on death rather than submission. A large majority were dissatisfied, to a certain degree, with the commander-in-chief. Even George Clinton says: "We have no particular accounts yet from head-quarters, but I am apt to believe retreating is yet fashionable."

The defensive policy which Washington had felt obliged, at the sacrifice of all that self-love suggested and all that a naturally ardent and impetuous temper must have prompted, to adopt for the safety of the cause under the circumstances, had already brought upon him, as he knew it must, the charge of indecision, if not of imbecility. Even his bosom friend, Colonel Reed, dazzled by the more showy qualities of Lee, who was prodigiously overrated on account of his European military experience—acquired, however, under circumstances so different as to be of little comparative use in America—had privately joined that aspiring and insolent officer in disparaging the conduct of the com-

mander-in-chief; which came to his knowledge by his having accidentally opened a letter not intended for his eye, but which he had reason to suppose was an ordinary letter on public business. Yet he had shown the utter futility of a charge of indecision and vacillation, by persisting in the line of policy which he had marked out as the only one which would render success possible; namely that of wearying out the enemy, and avoiding such a decisive trial of strength as must inevitably prove destructive to the little, half-clothed, half-armed, and more than half-dispirited band which constituted his entire force.

Thus left without a personal friend near him in whose hearty support he could confide; feeling that he was surrounded with critics rather than supporters; under difficulties as great as ever were laid upon the judgment, skill, and patience of mortal man, Washington remained calm and determined, crushing his wounded feelings into his own bosom, pursuing his labors with a single eye to the great end, and leaving success and fame in the hands of the Ruler of the universe, whom he felt to be on his side and the side of Freedom.

If any have ever doubts of the religious faith of Washington, the study of his conduct and letters of this period would go far to convince the most skeptical, that nothing but an abiding and most hearty faith could have sustained his calmness, and his disregard of appearances,

for he was a man to whom the approbation of his fellow-men was very precious.

At this unhappy juncture, Governor Livingston, of New Jersey, wrote him:

"I can easily form some idea of the difficulties under which you labor, particularly of one for which the public can make no allowance, because your prudence and fidelity to the cause will not suffer you to reveal it to the public; an instance of magnanimity superior, perhaps, to any that can be shown in battle. But depend upon it, my dear sir, the impartial world will do you ample justice before long. May God support you under that fatigue, both of body and mind, to which you must be constantly exposed."

It was at the chief's own request that General Lee had been entrusted with a command next in dignity and importance to his own, although objections had been felt by others, grounded both on Lee's traits of character and his being an Englishman.

Washington was, as we have seen, aware of his hot and ungoverned temper, but thought his military skill invaluable to an inexperienced army, and so always paid great deference to his opinion. This helped to make Lee more and more conceited, and seems to have confirmed him in the notion that he was the better general of the two.

Mr. Irving says—"It is evident that Lee considered Washington's star to be on the decline, and his own in the ascendant." And no wonder, when we find Reed

writing to him: "I do not mean to flatter or praise you, at the expense of any other; but I do think it is entirely owing to you, that this army, and the liberties of America so far as they are dependent on it, are not entirely cut off. You have decision, a quality often wanting in minds otherwise valuable; and I ascribe to this our escape from York Island, King's Bridge, and the Plains; and I have no doubt, had you been here, the garrison of Mount Washington would now have composed a part of this army."

Colonel Reed in after times saw his error, and found a "place of repentance," having "sought it earnestly, with tears." Washington could forgive even his own familiar friend for a momentary treachery, for the best people learn by self-knowledge to be merciful to the faults of others,—but at the time it was evidently a sore blow to him.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Lee's advice—His jealousy of Washington—Delays in obeying orders—Endeavoring to make an independent movement, to the injury of the Commander-in-chief—Cabals against Washington—Lee's capture by the British—Retreat across the Jerseys—Position and prospects of the Army—New powers granted by Congress.

LEE'S characteristic advice, with respect to the interminable delays of Congress in granting the necessary supplies, was that Washington should threaten to lay down his commission, which would probably have been the very thing most men would have thought of. But such an idea seems never to have been entertained, even at the darkest hour, by the man whose heroic soul had the whole weight of responsibility to bear; and he bore it, not as a hireling, but as one whose dearest interests were bound up in the common cause. Lee's jealousy of Washington, and his desire to find an opportunity of supplanting him, added greatly to all the difficulties of this period. Not only did he delay, under various pretences, marching to the succor of the commander-in-chief, when the army in Jersey was on the point of annihilation, but he was secretly undermining his influence, and the respect instinctively felt

for him throughout the country, by letters in every direction, containing such passages as these:—"Indecision bids fair for tumbling down the goodly fabric of American freedom, and with it, the rights of mankind. 'Twas indecision of Congress prevented our having a noble army, and on an excellent footing. 'Twas indecision in our military councils which cost us the garrison of Fort Washington, the consequence of which must be fatal, unless remedied in time by a contrary spirit.

"Enclosed, I send you an extract of a letter from the general, on which you will make your comments; and I have no doubt you will concur with me in the necessity of raising immediately an army to save us from perdition."

This to General Heath:—

"I perceive that you have formed an idea that, should General Washington remove to the Straits of Magellan, the instructions he left with you, upon a particular occasion, have, to all intents and purposes, invested you with a command separate from, and independent of any other superiors."

To Reed he writes:—"I received your most obliging, flattering letter; lament with you that fatal indecision of mind, which in war is a much greater disqualification than stupidity, or even want of personal courage. Accident may put a decisive blunderer in the right; but eternal defeat and miscarriage must at-

tend the man of the best parts, if cursed with indecision."

Afterwards, to Governor Cooke, of Rhode Island:—

"Theory joined to practice, or a heaven-born genius, can alone constitute a general. As to the latter, God Almighty indulges the modern world very rarely with the spectacle; and I do not know, from what I have seen, that he has been more profuse of this ethereal spirit to the Americans than to other nations."

All this time Lee was making every possible and impossible excuse to avoid aiding Washington with his troops; the chief in the dignity of his own honesty trying, to the last, to believe in Lee, and to rely upon his statements.

It has been said that Washington was never deceived in a man whom he had a fair opportunity of knowing; and we can hardly say whether or not this case should be considered an exception. It would seem that Washington continued to rely upon his second in command as an officer, after he had become fully aware of his defects as a man. It was not long before Lee discovered himself so fully as to lose even his military reputation.

Three weeks did Washington wait, hope and urge. Philadelphia was evidently the immediate object of the enemy. "Do come on," he writes to Lee; "your arrival may be fortunate, and, if it can be effected without delay, may be the means of preserving a city,

whose loss must prove of the most fatal consequence to the cause of America."

And again:—"Philadelphia, beyond all question, is the object of the enemy's movements, and nothing less than our utmost exertions will prevent General Howe from possessing it. The force I have is weak, and utterly incompetent to that end. I must, therefore, entreat you to push on with every possible succor you can bring."

Lee, meanwhile, writes to General Heath for some of General Gates's troops to be sent to him. "I am in hopes," he says, "to reconquer (if I may so express myself) the Jerseys. It was really in the hands of the enemy at my arrival." Washington still urged and almost entreated. "I have so frequently mentioned our situation, and the necessity of your aid, that it is painful for me to add a word on the subject," he says.

But Lee, perfectly heedless of all these appeals, staid where he was, and meditated separate plans, the credit of whose success might redound to his own glory.

Mr. Irving's account of his appearance and conduct is most graphic and amusing, but we must not indulge ourselves by extracting it. Suffice it to say, that all Lee's wild dreams ended in his being made prisoner, in the most mortifying way, by a party of British dragoons, just as he was signing a letter he had written to General Gates to this effect:—

"There never was so d—d a stroke; *entre nous*, a certain great man is most d—bly deficient. He has

thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties; if I stay in this province I risk myself and army; and if I do not stay the province is lost for ever."

The account of his capture (given by Wilkinson,) concludes:—

"There was a shout of triumph, but a great hurry to make sure of the prize before the army should arrive to the rescue. A trumpet sounded the recall to the dragoons, who were chasing the scattered guards. The general, bareheaded, and in his slippers and blanket coat, was mounted on Wilkinson's horse, which stood at the door, and the troops clattered off with their prisoner to Brunswick. In three hours the booming of cannon in that direction, told the exultation of the enemy.

"They boasted of having taken the American Palladium; for they considered Lee the most scientific and experienced of the rebel generals."

Washington uttered no word of censure against Lee in his despatches to Congress, but exerted himself in every possible way until an exchange had been accomplished.

Lee would not have claimed so many words in a life of Washington, were it not at this juncture he had come within a possibility, at least, of supplanting the commander-in-chief. So heavy was the discouragement under which Washington was laboring, not without its natural consequence of unpopularity, that if

Lee, who had acquired the position of a military idol to the army, had achieved the separate movement which he was contemplating, and succeeded in breaking the *cordon* of the enemy, there seems to have been a chance of his surpassing the chief, and throwing him completely into the background, after all his services.

This could have been only temporary: but as Mr. Irving observes:—

"What an unfortunate change it would have been for the country! Lee was undoubtedly a man of brilliant talents, shrewd sagacity, and much knowledge and experience in the art of war; but he was wilful and uncertain in his temper, self-indulgent in his habits, and an egotist in warfare; boldly dashing for a soldier's glory, rather than warily acting for a country's good. He wanted those great moral qualities which, in addition to military capacity, inspired such universal confidence in the wisdom, rectitude and patriotism of Washington, enabling him to direct and control legislative bodies as well as armies; to harmonize the jarring passions and jealousies of a wide and imperfect confederacy, and to cope with the varied exigencies of the Revolution."

As it was ordered, however, Lee's true character came to light, and Washington's retreat through the Jerseys received its just meed of praise, as a stroke of good generalship. It was an orderly retreat of nearly one hundred miles, accomplished at a slow pace, in order to allow time for the country people to join them,

and accompanied by all the cannon and nearly all the stores of the army, though four rivers were to be crossed in the transit. Twice there had been a retrograde movement, in the expectation of meeting the enemy, or with an intention of defying him, but no engagement had taken place. Washington reached Trenton in safety on December 2d, and crossing the Delaware, encamped on the right bank, and there remained for about three weeks, watching the movements of the British, who were evidently approaching Philadelphia. He writes to his brother:—

"No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them. However, under a full persuasion of the justice of our cause, I cannot entertain an idea that it will finally sink, though it may remain for some time under a cloud."

One thing strikes one as remarkable, in studying this part of Washington's career, that there was any body left who held an unshaken opinion of his military skill.

We, who have the advantage of seeing at a glance his course and its results, have no difficulty in awarding him the credit he all the time deserved. But for his contemporaries it must have been far less easy. To be sure they had his past conduct, character and services to found an opinion upon; but in sixteen years of peaceful farming and fox-hunting, a man might forget a good deal that he had learned in early youth, even under General Braddock.

We cannot help thinking there must have been a great deal, not only of sound sense and good judgment, but of generous feeling in the people and the Congress, who still believed in Washington and furthered his measures. His own weight of character, and the honesty and truthfulness of his countenance and manner, must have had a large share in producing faith in his movements; but, after all, no little credit is due to the people, who were obliged to look on and see him retreat and retreat, when they had no means of judging of his reasons. It is pleasant to think that a large proportion of those he fought for were worthy of his labors and sacrifices.

"This," says Sparks, "was the gloomiest period of the war. The campaign had been little else than a series of disasters and retreats. The enemy had gained possession of Rhode Island, Long Island, the city of New York, Staten Island, and nearly the whole of the Jerseys, and seemed on the point of extending their conquests into Pennsylvania. By the fatal scheme of short enlistments, and by sickness, the effective force with General Washington had dwindled away, till it hardly deserved the name of an army. A proclamation was published jointly by Lord Howe and General Howe, offering pardon in the king's name, to all who should take the oath of allegiance and come under his protection in sixty days.

"Many persons, among whom were men of wealth

and consideration, accepted these terms, and went over to the enemy.

"Others, especially in New Jersey, took the oath, but remained at their homes.

"In short, so great was the panic and so dark the prospect, that a general despondency pervaded the continent. In the midst of these scenes of trial and discouragement, Washington stood firm. Whatever his apprehensions may have been, no misgivings were manifest in his conduct or his counsels.

"From his letters, written at this time on the western bank of the Delaware, it does not appear that he yielded for a moment to a sense of immediate danger, or to a doubt of ultimate success. On the contrary, they breathe the same determined spirit, and are marked by the same confidence, calmness, and forethought, which distinguish them on all other occasions. When asked what he would do, if Philadelphia should be taken, he is reported to have said—'We will retreat beyond the Susquehanna River; and thence, if necessary, to the Alleghany Mountains.' Knowing, as he did, the temper of the people, the deep-rooted cause of the controversy, and the actual resources of the confederacy, he was not disheartened by temporary misfortunes, being persuaded that perseverance would at last overcome every obstacle."

Burke thought the position of our army at this time very precarious. "An army," he says, "that is obliged at all times and in all situations, to decline an engage-

ment, may delay their ruin, but can never defend their country." Some one called it "a scuffle for liberty."

It was not very long after this that the British who had been in possession of the whole route, were obliged to ask of Washington a safe conduct for money and stores, to be sent for the use of the prisoners captured at Trenton.

While he lay in camp at Trenton the state of the army, then in imminent danger of being totally disbanded, owing to the dissatisfaction of the Jersey people, obliged him to ask for new powers, powers indeed which he himself felt Congress might well refuse to grant.

"It may be said, that this is an application for powers that are too dangerous to be intrusted. I can only add, that desperate diseases require desperate remedies; and I with truth declare, that I have no lust after power, but I wish with as much fervency as any man upon this wide-extended continent, for an opportunity of turning the sword into the ploughshare. But my feelings, as an officer and a man, have been such as to force me to say, that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than I have. It is needless to add, that short enlistments, and a mistaken dependence upon militia, have been the origin of all our misfortunes and the great accumulation of our debt.

"We find, sir, that the enemy are daily gathering strength from the disaffected. This strength, like a

snow-ball, by rolling, will increase, unless some means can be devised to check effectually the progress of the enemy's arms. Militia may possibly do it for a little while; but in a little while, also, and the militia of those States which have been frequently called upon, will not turn out at all; or, if they do, it will be with so much reluctance and sloth, as to amount to the same thing.

"Instance New Jersey! Witness Pennsylvania! Could any thing but the river Delaware have saved Philadelphia? Can any thing (the exigency of the case indeed may justify it) be more destructive to the recruiting service, than giving ten dollars' bounty for six weeks' service of the militia, who come in, you cannot tell how, go, you cannot tell when, and act, you cannot tell where; consume your provisions, exhaust your stores, and leave you at last at a critical moment."

But Congress did not refuse, and in this case, as in most others, answered favorably Washington's volumes of letters, filled, as was necessary under the distressing and threatening circumstances of the case, with requisitions of every kind. He often apologizes for this, yet the thing speaks for itself, and however tiresome, it must be done, and was done, with such faithfulness as in the end answered the purpose.

Washington not only received from Congress the powers of almost a military dictator, but accompanied by such gracious words as these:—

"Happy is it for this country that the general of

their forces can safely be intrusted with the most unlimited power, and neither personal security, liberty nor property, be in the least degree endangered thereby."

To which Washington replied:—

"I find Congress has done me the honor to intrust me with powers, in my military capacity, of the highest nature, and almost unlimited extent. Instead of thinking myself freed from all *civil* obligations by this mark of their confidence, I shall constantly bear in mind that, as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside when those liberties are firmly established."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Public patience wearing out—The art of retreating—Recruiting—Some accessions to the army give rise to new hopes and new projects—Hard duty—Crossing the Delaware—Surprise of the Hessians—Battle of Trenton—Entrance into Philadelphia—Battle of Princeton—Anecdotes of Washington's bravery.

THE discouraging aspect of affairs, after the loss of Fort Washington, and while the weary and diminished army was on the west side of the Delaware, awaiting, with the courage of desperation, the movements of Lord Howe and his brother Sir William, tried the soul of Washington to the utmost. Retreating and retreating, with scarce a gleam of success to cheer the heavy clouds of disappointment, it needed all his energy and all his perseverance—superior to most other men's—to keep off despair and sustain activity. The Howes were only waiting for the ice to take Philadelphia, which had been left under command of General Putnam.

The army under Washington at this time amounted to ten thousand, one hundred and six men; of this number, five thousand, three hundred and ninety-nine were sick or on furlough, leaving four thousand, seven hundred and seven fit for duty.

The complete renovation of the army, by new enlistments and judicious liberality, was now the theme of his letters to Congress; and Congress was wise, and listened, and aided, and did every thing in its power to meet his views. Mutual respect and mutual confidence mark the correspondence, which one really cannot read without a feeling that he is in the presence of superior minds, and hearts worthy of the honor of managing a patriot revolution.

After watching the movements of the enemy for some time with the greatest anxiety, and finding his own force increased by the accession of troops from Ticonderoga and elsewhere, Washington resolved upon attempting the passage of the Delaware, and surprising the British force then lying at Trenton. December 25th was the time fixed upon for this bold stroke.

The weather was very severe, and the river full of floating masses of ice. The transit must be made in darkness, and the least noise would involve the frustration of the plan, if not the destruction of all engaged in it. Washington superintended the whole in person, and it was four o'clock in the morning when the entire army, with its artillery, had made its tedious and perilous way through the icy waters, and stood upon the eastern shore, in a bitter wind, and under a storm of hail and snow. The troops, in two divisions, were to attack the town at two different points, and this was accomplished almost at one and the same moment.

It is said that while Washington, wound up to the

last pitch of anxiety and excited feeling, was standing on the shore, watch in hand, directing the transportation of the troops, an officer approached and handed him a letter. "What a time is this to hand me letters!" he said hastily, as if the solemnity of the scene ought to concentrate all attention. He forgot that no one there could fully sympathize with him upon whom the responsibility was weighing.

Some one else told him, after the divisions had started on their perilous march, that not only the men but their arms were soaked with freezing water, and asked what should be done.

"Advance and charge!" and though every heavy tread of the marching thousands was to be made through snow, and in the face of cutting sleet, no one faltered, though the cold was clinching at their very vitals.

As the day broke, a countryman came out to chop wood for his fire, and some one of the staff who rode with their general at the head of the troops, inquired where the picket lay.

"I don't know, I'm sure," said the fellow, who had no idea of getting himself into trouble.

"You need not be afraid to tell," said the aid; "this is General Washington."

"God bless and prosper you, sir," said the farmer; "there they are, and just by the tree stands the sentry."

They moved on at a quicker pace. In another moment all was confusion. When the fight was at its

thickest, and Washington was hurrying on another column, an officer called out—"Their flags are struck, sir!"

"Struck! so they are!" he said, looking up. Then putting spurs to his horse he galloped forward, shouting words of cheer, and bestowing praise on the brave fellows who loved him so well.

The enemy's force, consisting principally of Hessians,* under the command of Colonel Rahl, taken entirely by surprise, and in their confusion, half-blinded by the storm, made first an attempt at resistance, then an effort at retreat, but finally a complete surrender of themselves as prisoners of war—twenty-three officers, and about nine hundred privates. Six brass field-pieces and a thousand stand of arms, were not the least acceptable fruits of victory. Seven officers and five-and-twenty men were killed, on the British side; on ours two privates killed, and two frozen to death. General Washington, fearing the effects of cold and fatigue upon his men, recrossed the Delaware immediately, and reached his camp in safety, with all his prisoners and the voluminous spoils of war; and he made a sort of triumphal entry into Philadelphia, in order to raise the spirits of the people and the army, by the exhibition of tangible proofs of success.

The British retreated to Princeton, where they were reinforced from New York, and placed under command

* Troops hired for the war by the king of Great Britain from the Duke of Hesse Casse.

of Earl Cornwallis. As soon as his troops were sufficiently recruited, General Washington had once more crossed the river and taken up his post at Trenton, ready for the attack which he knew would be made. On the 2d of January, 1777, news came that the enemy was approaching, and several parties were sent to harass and hinder them on their march, so that they did not reach Trenton until four o'clock in the afternoon. By this time the American army had taken up a position beyond the Assanpink, a small stream that empties into the Delaware below Trenton, and on whose banks our cannon were planted.

"Now is the time to make sure of Washington," said one of the British officers to Lord Cornwallis. But my lord, with his overwhelming force, was too confident of victory to be in any great haste. "Our troops have marched a good way and are tired," he said, "and the old fox can't escape this time, for the Delaware is frozen, and we have him completely in our power. To-morrow morning we will fall upon him, and take him and his ragamuffins all at once."

"If Washington be the soldier I think him," was the reply, "you'll not see him to-morrow morning."

And so the event proved; for Washington, after setting the night-watch, and kindling a row of fires along the bank of the creek, sent his baggage down to Burlington, and withdrew his little army so quietly that it was not till daylight that the British suspected their departure. While they were staring at each other in

blank astonishment, and asking, "Where can Washington be gone?" the booming of cannon was heard in the direction of Princeton.

"There he is!" said every body, and they were quite right, for he had set out with the bold resolve of marching upon Brunswick, and taking the stores which had been accumulated there by the British. But encountering three British regiments at Princeton, he had stopped to give them battle, and was even then coming off victorious with three hundred prisoners. Lord Cornwallis and his army returned crestfallen to Brunswick, fearing for the money and stores which had been Washington's first object, and which he writes to the President of Congress he could probably have taken if he could have commanded six or eight hundred fresh troops, though he dared not attempt it with men worn out by two sleepless nights and forced marches. The seventy thousand pounds said to have been in the military chest at Brunswick, would have put such sinews into our side of the war, at that critical time, that it is probable Mr. Robert Morris would have been saved a great deal of trouble, and General Washington enabled to return to Mount Vernon three or four years earlier than he did.

Robert Morris was the great financier who managed to obtain money for the war, even under the worst circumstances, often pledging his own personal credit for it, when the public credit was worth almost nothing.

It is often said that without him, even Washington would have been of no avail to our cause.

At the battle of Princeton, our army lost General Mercer, a brave and amiable officer, and a personal friend of Washington. On the British side, a young Captain Leslie, son of an English earl, was among the slain, and at the request of the prisoners he was buried with military honors.

Stories of Washington's contempt of personal danger are linked to this battle. His officers are said to have complained of it and remonstrated against it; but when the hottest of the fight came, he could not help dashing into it, cheering on his men and inspiring their courage by his own.

One of his aides-de-camp, Colonel Fitzgerald, a brave Irishman, had been ordered by the commander-in-chief to bring up troops from the rear of the column. When he returned, Washington was not to be found. In a moment, however, the parting smoke showed him in the thick of the battle, endeavoring to rally a line which had been broken by the enemy. Failing in this, he reined his horse up, directly in front of the enemy,—perhaps in something like the position in which we see him in Brown's splendid statue, just erected in New York,—and there stood, as if to say to the discomfited troops,—"Death rather than dishonor, for me at least."

Fitzgerald, horror stricken, dropped the bridle on his horse's neck and covered his eyes with his hands,

that he might not see him fall. Then came a volley of musketry, and the aide once more looks for his chief. There he is, waving his hat, cheering on the troops, while victory follows in his footsteps.

"Thank God! your Excellency is safe!" the warm-hearted Irishman exclaims, bursting into tears of joyful surprise. Washington, all radiant, gave him a hearty grasp of the hand, exclaiming, "Away, my dear Colonel, and bring up the troops. The day is our own."

The moral effect of this victory can hardly be appreciated. The public mind, sunk in despondency by incessant disaster, was cold and spiritless, though obstinately bent on resistance. Criticism was rife, and those who stood by and did nothing, found it easy to show how much ought to have been done, by those who had alone borne all the hardships and suffered most of the losses. But when Washington had seized this glorious opportunity of showing what he could do with an inferior force, as soon as he caught the British at a distance from the ships which had heretofore backed all their land operations, the whole aspect of affairs was changed, and the war assumed at once a character of dignity and hope, which had been well-nigh lost or forgotten amid defeat and disaster. Success threw magic light on Washington's wisdom and patience; he was a hero, the "American Fabius," and several other very fine characters, any one of whom would have been honored by being compared to him. In three weeks to drive the British from all their posts on the Delaware,

and from all but two in the Jerseys, was a feat that caused a degree of exultation and an exuberance of praise, that might have proved dangerous if not prudently managed. But Washington was on his guard, both for himself and the public, and he neither sat still to enjoy his laurels, nor relaxed his vigilance because of the confusion of the enemy. He speaks of them as "panic-struck," and immediately plans an attack on them at New York, calling on Generals Lincoln and Heath to make a feint, as if intending to attack them from the Hudson, in order that Washington might march upon them from Jersey.

But this project was, for various reasons, given up, and Washington remained in winter-quarters at Morristown, recruiting his army and preparing for the next campaign, though he took many opportunities of harassing the enemy and counteracting his designs. The people of Jersey, who had been almost to a man disaffected to the patriot cause, had been pretty well cured of their fancy for British rule, by the conduct of the Hessian legions in that State; and Washington, taking up his winter-quarters among them, and using his influence judiciously, gained many of them over to the right side.

As the Hessian prisoners were marched through the towns in Pennsylvania on their way to Philadelphia, they were hooted at by the inhabitants, who had conceived a most hateful idea of the hired soldiers that could speak no English. But General Washington caused notices to be put up all through the country, to

the effect that these soldiers were not to blame for the war, but sold by their sovereign to Great Britain, and so fighting by compulsion. After this, they were no longer molested, but treated with kindness by the inhabitants.

The campaign of 1776, being now finished gloriously, Washington established his quarters at Morristown, having cleared the Jerseys of the British, with the exception of the towns of Brunswick and Amboy, by means of which they had an open communication by water with New York. After the successes of the 25th and 26th December, "the enemy evacuated the region, with the greatest hurry and confusion." Morristown was not as good a position for winter-quarters as might have been wished, but being in a mountainous country in was difficult of access to the enemy, and being the depot of a farming region was well supplied with provisions and forage. Here he spent the entire winter, harassing the enemy when he could, but occupied incessantly with the care of the whole extent of the American forces, distributed at various points, from Canada to St. Augustine. His letters during the period are numerous and characteristic. General Lee's situation, as a prisoner of war, forms the subject of many of these, the British at first seeming very anxious to make an example of that officer, as a deserter from their service. The treatment of prisoners on both sides was an anxious and annoying point, each side accusing the other of unnecessary hardship or neglect. The cor-

respondence between General Washington and General Howe on this topic, is sharp and bitter. On the other hand, Washington had the duty of keeping Congress right about these matters, since gentlemen legislating quietly at a distance are very liable to mistake in directing military affairs.

Then there were incessant questions of rank to settle; the offended dignity of officers who thought themselves undervalued to be appeased; and the warmest persuasives to be used to those who were threatening to resign.

A curious expedient at one time suggested itself to Washington, mentioned in a letter to Colonel Morgan.

"It occurs to me that if you would dress a company or two of true woodsmen in the Indian style, and let them make the attack with screaming and yelling, as the Indians do, it would have very good consequences, especially if as little as possible was said or known of the matter beforehand."

Another letter concludes—

"In a word, if a man cannot act in all respects as he can wish, he must do what appears best under the circumstances he is in. This I aim at, however I may fall short of the end."

The authority given by Congress to the commander-in-chief being used by him in requiring an oath of allegiance, gave great dissatisfaction, particularly in New Jersey, whose Legislature passed a resolve of censure against it, as interfering with their prerogative. The

proclamation required every good citizen to come forward and take the oath of allegiance to the United States, granting leave to the disaffected to retire within the enemy's lines, and declaring that all who should neglect or refuse to comply with the order, within the space of thirty days, should be "deemed adherents to the King of Great Britain, and treated as common enemies to these American States." There was a great clamor about this. It was said there were "no United States," and that each State must administer its own oath of allegiance. But Washington made no change. The dangers of pretended neutrality had become sufficiently apparent to him, and he chose, as he always did, to defer his personal popularity to the great cause.

"These fellows at Elizabethtown, as well as all others, who wish to remain with us till the expiration of the thirty days, for no other purpose than to convey intelligence to the enemy and poison our people's minds, must and shall be compelled to withdraw immediately within the enemy's lines; others, who are hesitating which side to take, and behave friendly to us till they determine, must be treated with lenity."

One of Washington's letters to a pouting general is so lively and characteristic of the directness with which he treated all subjects, as well as so good a general hint to egotists, that we must not quite omit it:

"Do not, my dear General S——, torment yourself any longer with imaginary slights, and involve others

in the perplexities you feel on that score. No other officer of rank in the whole army has so often conceived himself neglected, slighted and ill-treated, as you have done, and none, I am sure, has had less cause than yourself to entertain such ideas. * * * * But I have no time to dwell upon a subject of this kind. I shall quit it with an earnest exhortation, that you will not suffer yourself to be teazed with evils that exist only in the imagination, and with slights that have no existence at all."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Army marched to Germantown—Lafayette's arrival—Battles of Chad's Ford and White Marsh—Winter quarters at Valley Forge—Suffering of the troops—Mrs. Washington's kindness—Washington's sympathy, and remonstrances—Cabal against the commander-in-chief—Indignation of his friends—Conway's repentance—Half-pay for the troops—Alliance with the French—Battle of Monmouth.

THE enemy's intentions being as yet beyond conjecture, General Washington marched his army to Germantown, that it might be ready to defend the city of Philadelphia, in case that should prove to be General Howe's object. He then visited Philadelphia to hold conference with Congress, and while there saw, for the first time, the young Marquis de Lafayette, destined by Providence to be one of his chief supports during the war, and his dearest friend for life.

What a blessing was Lafayette's arrival! Not only to the struggling States, but in particular to Washington. The spirit of the generous young Frenchman was to the harassed chief as cold water to the thirsty soul. No jealousies, no fault-finding, no selfish emulation; but pure, high, uncalculating enthusiasm, and a devotion to the character and person of Washington that

melted the strong man, and opened those springs of tenderness which cares, duties and trials had well-nigh choked up. It is not difficult to believe that Lafayette had even more to do with the success of the war than we are accustomed to think. Whatever kept up the chief's heart, upbore the army and the country; for it is plain that, without derogation from the ability or faithfulness of any of the heroic contributors to the final triumph, Washington was in a peculiar manner the life and soul,—the main-spring and the balance wheel,—the spur and the rein,—of the whole movement and its result. Blessings, then, on Lafayette, the helper and consoler of the chosen father of his heart, through so many trials! His name goes down to posterity on the same breath that is destined to proclaim for ever the glory of Washington!

Lafayette, all eagerness to meet the commander whose fame had excited his young enthusiasm, was introduced with the usual forms, and from the very ordinary reception accorded him by Washington, it was supposed that the chief was not particularly pleased with the mercurial and demonstrative young Frenchman. The truth is that Washington partook, in some degree, the English prejudice against "foreigners," and that from this cause personal acquaintance with them was not particularly agreeable to him.

But as the dinner proceeded, and the new comer had, in the ease of conversation, made himself understood as a volunteer for liberty, possessed of the most

generous sentiments, and willing to sacrifice all that men count most dear in the cause of American freedom, Washington's keen eye watched his every look and word, and formed an opinion which he never had a moment's occasion to alter or regret. As soon as the company left the table, he drew Lafayette to the recess of a window, and there, in the kindest manner, welcomed and thanked him, and invited him at once to become one of his military family.

The next day, going on a tour of inspection of forts, he invited Lafayette to accompany him, and from that hour the Marquis was his bosom companion and filial friend, enjoying an intimacy with him that no other man ever attained to.

The private story of Lafayette, though too long for insertion here, is, and ought to be so interesting to Americans, that we shall offer a slight sketch of it hereafter, bespeaking for it the grateful attention of our readers.*

Sir William Howe's designs upon Philadelphia becoming very evident after this, the army was marched to Wilmington, Delaware, whence they moved to the high ground near Chad's Ford. An engagement ensued, and the Americans were routed, and the Marquis de Lafayette received a wound in the leg, which confined him for some time.

The battle of Germantown, during which a very heavy fog mingled friends and foes, and a panic flight

* See Appendix 8.

of part of the troops completed the discomfiture of the rest, is one of the dark points in our history, yet, strange to say, it proved in the end to have exerted a favorable influence on the result of the war. Washington never supposed he had done any thing remarkable in undertaking it, and he suffered extreme distress from its unhappy result. "It was a bloody day," he said. "Would to Heaven I could add that it had been a fortunate one for us." Yet when the news of it reached Paris, where American commissioners were endeavoring to obtain aid from France, the Count de Vergennes, prime minister of Louis XVI., was so struck with the boldness of General Washington in attacking the far superior force of General Howe, and that with an army of newly raised and little disciplined troops, that he felt at once inspired with an interest and confidence which led him to accord the aid we had requested.

A few days after the battle of Germantown, there were skirmishes at Whitemarsh, near which Sir William Howe was posted with twelve thousand men. General Washington's position being an advantageous one, he did not choose to leave it in order to attack the British in their chosen position; and Howe being equally unwilling to quit his ground, no general engagement took place, and after three days' manœuvring, the British army suddenly retreated to Philadelphia.

As it was now the middle of December, winter quarters became the matter of deepest concern, for the men had not even clothing to keep them warm under

cover, so destitute had they been left of all necessary supplies. Shoes had come to be a luxury enjoyed only by the fortunate, and a blanket, with or without holes, was shared by as many as could creep under it. Surrounded as the army was by the disaffected and the timid, money would hardly buy what was needed, and even money was very scarce.

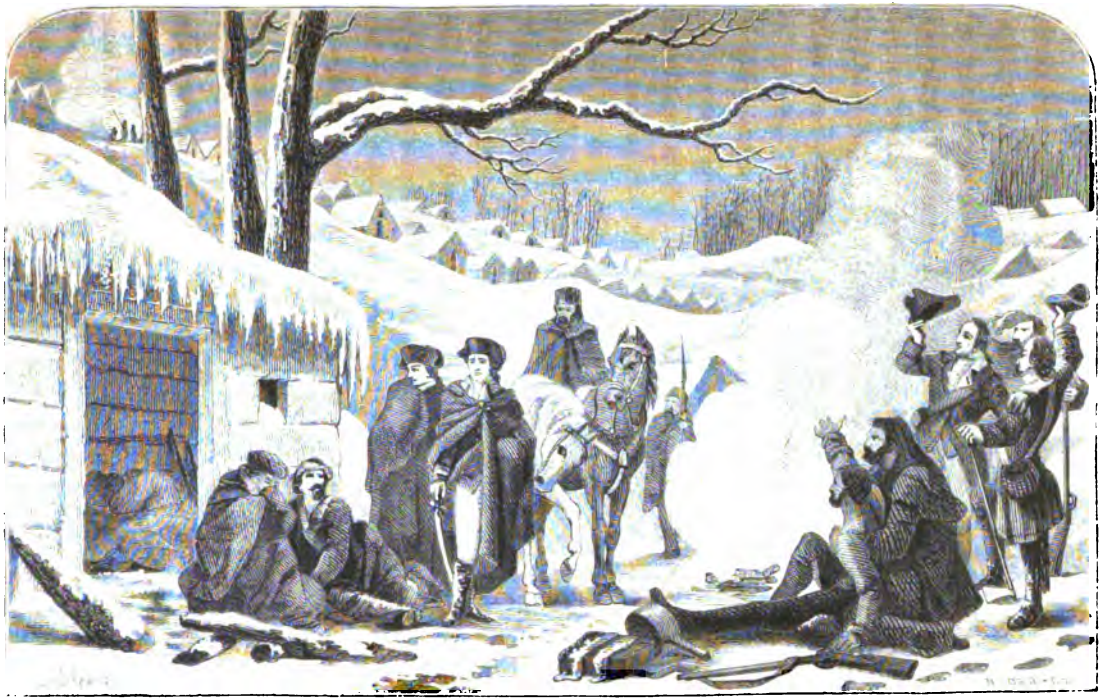
In this distressed state was the encampment at Valley Forge—a name of sad memory so long as the American heart shall beat—begun and continued. The spot lies about twenty miles from Philadelphia, between the banks of the Schuylkill and a line of hills;—a pleasant scene in summer or autumn, when one visits it in peace and comfort; but in the long months of that dreadful winter, with scarcely shelter and sustenance for bare life, a melancholy desert, though teeming with human beings. It had been selected by Washington, after a vain attempt to obtain a guiding opinion from a council of war, as being near enough to Philadelphia to be aware of the enemy's movements; and also for the reason that the interior of the State was occupied by families from Philadelphia, who must necessarily be much distressed by the scarcity that would result from the presence of an army in the country. The men began to erect huts or log-houses on the 18th of December, and as far as was possible Washington, who superintended the whole work in person, tried to make the thing tolerable, by offering a reward in money to whoever should invent the best mode of roofing, and by

placing the troops from the same State in neighborhoods. Then the camp had to be intrenched, and a bridge to be built across the Schuylkill, in order to keep open a communication with the country. Scarcely was all this completed, when information was received which rendered it probable that a detachment of the enemy had left Philadelphia, with intentions that would make it necessary to be prepared to meet them.

When troops were detached for this purpose, it was found that the absolute distress prevailing had so far impaired discipline, that a mutiny might be expected if the men were ordered on duty without proper supplies of food and clothing.

"Not a single hoof to slaughter," says Washington, "and not more than twenty-five barrels of flour!" Eleven thousand men in this condition weighed heavy on the soul of a commander, even though he and his officers shared generously in the privations of the troops. A glance at the general orders of that dreadful time, will show what were the labors and trials of the commander-in-chief. Yet there were some people reasonable enough to wonder that the army was lying idle, and to suggest that a winter campaign should have been attempted! This was a little too much, even for Washington, and he bursts out in a tone quite unusual with him, in his grave and measured despatches to Congress:—

"We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter quarters or not (for



Washington at Valley Forge.

I am sure no resolution of mine would warrant the Remonstrance), reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks and stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow.

* * * I can assure those gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room, by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent."

By way of compensation or consolation for extraordinary sufferings, Congress ordered one month's extra pay to be given as a reward for "soldierly patience, fidelity and zeal in the cause of the country," and Washington declares that he shall take especial care that none shall get it who do not deserve it.

Mrs. Washington spent this winter, as she did the others of the war, in the camp, and made herself very popular with the men by the interest she showed in their wants, and by the entirely simple and self-denying style of her own requisitions. The general had one of the log huts, sixteen feet in length by fourteen in width, to himself, and Mrs. Washington announces to a female friend that he had had "another hut built to dine in," which made their quarters "much more comfortable." She occupied herself in making shirts for

the soldiers, who were many of them reduced to one or even none, and in visiting and relieving those whose sufferings became especially known to her. Her quiet and housewifely habits, and the gentle influence she exerted, no doubt contributed to allay the irritability natural to a body of men suffering under such privations; for nothing can be more like insult to the poor hungry, shivering soldier, than the sight of luxury and self-indulgence in his superiors—too often witnessed in camp, if we may believe the records of military life.

Washington's solicitude for the army was incessant, and his sympathy with its deprivations and sufferings appears in almost every letter he writes. This period, sad and dark as it was, was further embittered to Washington, by the discovery of a virulent faction against himself. Anonymous letters were the principal means resorted to, and members of Congress, as well as officers of the army, were not ashamed to adopt this cowardly and despicable mode of injuring a man, whom they dared not attack in any way more manly or respectable. Washington was sensitive, as any man with a heart in his bosom must be under such circumstances. He had perilled all, done all, suffered all, that the heavy time required. All through the war, he had lamented the imperfection of supplies, and all the untoward deficiences of the means placed at his disposal; and had wearied Congress with his faithful representations of the disadvantages that must arise from such a want of plan in these respects. Congress, with a nat-

ural dread of the increase of military power, much increased by the jealousy and dislike of General Washington entertained by some of its members, was often fitful and arbitrary in measures of relief for the army, and, from its distance from the scene of action—the means of communication being then slow and uncertain—often failed to give even what it intended to grant, until after the favorable moment had passed. This, to a temperament like Washington's, was trying beyond all that can be described. Every thing at stake—the cause of liberty, the credit of the army, and his own fame, justly very dear to him—it was agonizing to live in this suspense, and most wearisome to be incessantly contriving to keep up appearances to the enemy, and to meet the expectations of the country, with an exhausted military chest and a wretched commissariat. But to have, added to all this, the certainty that there was a powerful cabal against him, which drew its main strength from his failure to keep the British out of Philadelphia,—an achievement totally impossible with the men and means at his disposal,—was cruel indeed, and he felt it most severely.

General Gates was more than suspected of having lent himself to the scheme of detraction; but the main actors in the drama were General Conway and General Mifflin.

Here is a small specimen of an anonymous letter addressed to Congress:—

"The head cannot possibly be sound when the

whole body is disordered; the people of America have been guilty of idolatry in making a man their god, and the God of heaven and earth will convince them, by woful experience, that he is only a man. No good may be expected from the standing army, until Baal and his worshippers are banished from the camp."

It was not that Washington expected or desired that his public conduct should be exempted from remark or blame. He frequently, in the letters he wrote during this affair, expresses himself entirely willing to submit his character and the management of the war to the judgment of his countrymen. It was that men who professed, to his face, the greatest regard and approval, should be working to undermine him, so that he must necessarily feel insecure on all sides, hardly knowing whether there was about him a friend to whom he could safely trust. This gave the sting to censure, and added yet a shade of depression to his winter at Valley Forge.

But no sooner was the conspiracy made public, which it was by the disclosure of part of one of General Conway's letters to General Gates, let slip by an imprudent friend over a late dinner-table,—than Washington's friends rallied about him, vying with each other who should express most warmly his esteem and confidence in the commander-in-chief.

Patrick Henry generously avowed his regard for Washington, and his detestation of the concealed assassins, in two or three warm letters. "I really think,"

he says, "your personal welfare and the happiness of America are intimately connected." "While you face the armed enemies of our country in the field, and by the favor of God have been kept unhurt, I trust your country will never harbor in her bosom the miscreant who would ruin her best supporter. I wish not to flatter; but where arts unworthy honest men are used to defame and traduce you, I think it not amiss, but a duty, to assure you of the estimation in which the public hold you."

The beloved Lafayette pours out his heart in a copious flow of affection, and Washington's feelings had been so wounded by the unmasking of these pretended friends, that he was warm in his gratitude to the real ones. To the marquis he writes:—

"My dear Marquis, your favor of yesterday conveyed to me fresh proof of that friendship and attachment which I have happily experienced since the first of our acquaintance, and for which I entertain sentiments of the purest affection. It will ever constitute part of my happiness to know that I stand well in your opinion.* * * *

"The other observations contained in your letter have too much truth in them, and it is much to be lamented that things are not now as they formerly were. But we must not, in so great a contest, expect to meet with nothing but sunshine. I have no doubt but that every thing happens for the best; that we shall triumph over all misfortunes, and in the end be happy;

when, my dear Marquis, if you give me your company in Virginia, we may laugh at our past difficulties and the folly of others."

As soon as the intrigue was thus accidentally brought to light, every body concerned was anxious to rid himself of the suspicion of having taken part in it, and it is amusing to see the twists and glosses ingeniously devised to make something seem nothing, and enmity appear like manly frankness. General Conway, who, though perhaps not the most guilty, was made in a considerable degree the scape-goat, very soon lost his short-lived favor with Congress, and fell into general discesteem, from his vanity and want of principle. A hint at resignation was caught at in order to be rid of him, and Congress actually accepted a resignation which never was made. After this his offensive manners involved him in a duel, and he received a wound supposed to be mortal. At this solemn juncture, when he was trying to make his peace with Heaven, he wrote thus to Washington :—

"PHILADELPHIA, *23d July*, 1778.

"SIR,—I find myself just able to hold the pen during a few minutes, and take this opportunity of expressing my sincere grief for having done, written, or said any thing disagreeable to your Excellency. My career will soon be over; therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love,

veneration and esteem of these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues. I am with the greatest respect,

"Your obedient servant,

"THOMAS CONWAY."

This late repentance must be accepted as some atonement for his offence against Washington; and as for the injury he did the cause, and the far greater injury which might have ensued from his machinations and those of his more cunning abettors, we can only rejoice that Providence watched over the young republic, and saved it from a blow that might have been fatal.

But although, in a biography of Washington, we could not refuse a considerable space to the history of a cabal so nearly concerning his honor, it is well known that he himself never gave personal matters more than a secondary place.

He was much more anxiously occupied, during the winter of 1777–78 in procuring from Congress what he considered an act of justice to the army, than in ferreting out conspiracies against himself.

The particular measure advocated by him at this time was a provision of half-pay for life, or something equivalent to it, for every officer engaged in the war, *himself excepted.*

"Personally," he says, "as an officer, I have no interest in their decision, because I have declared, and I

now repeat it, that I will never receive the smallest benefit from the half-pay establishment; but, as a man who fights under the weight of a proscription, and as a citizen who wishes to see the liberty of his country established upon a permanent foundation, and whose property depends upon the success of our arms, I am deeply interested."

He urges the measure very warmly:—

"No order of men in the thirteen States has paid a more sacred regard to the proceedings of Congress than the army; for without arrogance or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said, that no history now extant can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours has done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude.

"To see men, without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes (for the want of which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet), and almost as often without provisions as with them, marching through the frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter-quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them till it could be built, and submitting without a murmur, is a proof of patience and obedience, which in my opinion can scarce be paralleled."

Congress did not quite come up to Washington's ideas in regard to the matter, but conceded half-pay for seven years after the conclusion of the war, to those

officers who should have sworn allegiance, and who should continue to reside in the United States. Also a bounty of eighty dollars in money, to every non-commissioned officer and soldier who should continue in the service until that time. This was a noble achievement, and served further to endear the commander-in-chief to his soldiers.

But the great event of the winter was the espousal by France of the American cause, the recognition of American independence, and the signing of a treaty of amity and alliance, dating from the 6th of February, 1778.

The news of the treaty arrived at Yorktown, where Congress was sitting, on the 2d of May, ten days after Lord North's "Bills of conciliation" had been rejected, as offering terms which, however acceptable they might have proved in the beginning of the contest, were now wholly unsatisfactory.

General Howe made no attempt on the camp during the winter, but his foraging parties were watched and often severely handled by the Americans. When Dr. Franklin, who was in Paris, was told that General Howe had taken Philadelphia, "Say rather," he replied, "that Philadelphia has taken General Howe," and the advantage was certainly a problematical one. Philadelphia was evacuated by the British on the 18th of June, 1776, General Clinton having superseded General Howe who returned to England in the spring.

Great efforts were made to harass the retreating

army, though the general opinion of the officers, except Washington, was adverse to an attempt to attack so far superior a force; one, too, which had been quietly housed all winter, well clothed, and abundantly fed, while our troops had, as we have seen, suffered privations that try the bravest spirit, and depress, for the time, the most determined energy. General Lee, who had by this time, after infinite difficulty and trouble on the part of Washington and the Congress, been exchanged, was particularly opposed to an attack, and in his usual tempestuous manner, represented it as foolhardy under the circumstances. But General Lee's opinions were by this time received with less deference than when he was in the heyday of his popularity.

In six days from the time the camp at Valley Forge was broken up, the whole army had crossed the Delaware, and were on Sir Henry Clinton's traces, only six miles behind him, as he hastened toward New York with his army.

On the 29th of June, the commander-in-chief sent the following despatch to Congress—

"FIELDS, NEAR MONMOUTH COURT-HOUSE, *29th June*, 1778.

"SIR,—I have the honor to inform you, that about seven o'clock yesterday morning both armies advanced on each other. About twelve, they met on the grounds near Monmouth Court-House, when an action commenced. We forced the enemy from the field, and encamped on the ground. They took a strong post in

our front, secured on both flanks by morasses and thick woods, where they remained till about twelve at night, and then retreated. I cannot at this time go into a detail of matters. When opportunity will permit I shall take the liberty of transmitting to Congress a more particular account of the proceedings of the day.

"I have the honor to be, &c."

Mr. Custis relates of this affair, that before the battle, as the general with a numerous suite was approaching the Court-House, he was met by a fifer boy who said, as if it was the most natural thing in the world, "They are all coming this way, your honor!" "Who are coming, my little man?" asked General Knox. "Why our boys, your honor, our boys, and the British right after them." "Impossible!" exclaimed Washington, and spurred on at full gallop, only to find, to his great pain and mortification, that the boy's intelligence was but too true. The very elite of the American army, five thousand picked men and officers, were in full retreat, closely pursued by the enemy. One of the aids now galloped up with a message from La Fayette, saying that the presence of the commander-in-chief was greatly needed at the scene of action.

The first inquiry of the chief was for Major-general Lee, who commanded the advance, and during the interview which followed occurred one of the few instances that history or tradition records, of Washington's losing command of his temper in public.

What he said to General Lee has never been repeated by those who heard it; but it was doubtless as strong an expression as passion could invent, or language utter.

"Why this ill-timed prudence, sir?" was the question.

Lee with the most insolent air replied: "I know no man better supplied with that rascally virtue than your Excellency."

"Will you command on this ground or not?"

"It is equal with me, where I command."

"Then I shall expect you to take proper measures to check the enemy," said the general, much incensed.

"Your orders shall be obeyed," replied Lee, "and I will not be the first to leave the field." And his bravery made it evident that an uncontrolled temper was the fault for which he afterwards suffered so severely, under the sentence of a court-martial.

To one of his aids who sprang to the ground with some ill-considered expression of excitement, Washington said, pointing to the horse which was grazing by the road side, "You will take your horse, sir, if you please." The general afterwards ordered Colonel Stewart and Lieutenant-colonel Ramsay, with their regiments, to check the advance of the enemy, which service was gallantly performed, while he himself proceeded to form a second line. "Follow your general!" he cried, waving his sword above his head as he spurred forward, and the broken lines began at once to return to order.

He rode on that day (for the only time during the war) a white charger that had been presented to him, and from the overpowering heat, and the deep and sandy nature of the soil, the poor horse sank under his rider and died on the spot.

It was upon a beautiful chesnut horse that he rode along the lines cheering the soldiers, in the familiar and endearing language always used by the officers in the Revolution, "Stand fast, my boys! and receive your enemy; the Southern line are advancing to support ye!" The person of Washington, always graceful, dignified and commanding, showed to peculiar advantage on that occasion. The good La Fayette, during his last visit to America, delighted to talk of the "times that tried men's souls," and from that venerated friend of our country, we derive a graphic description of Washington on the field of battle. La Fayette said: "At Monmouth I commanded a division, and it may be supposed was pretty well occupied; still I took time, amid the roar and confusion of the conflict, to admire our beloved chief, who rode along the lines, mounted on a splendid charger, amid the shouts of the soldiers, cheering them by his voice and example, and restoring the fortunes of the fight. I thought then, as now, that I never had beheld so superb a man."

Heedless of the remonstrances and entreaties of his officers, the commander-in-chief exposed himself under a burning sun to every danger throughout the action, and his high and chivalric daring made his friends the

more anxious for the preservation of a life so dear to all, and so important to the success of the common cause.

While he was reconnoitring the enemy from an elevated part of the field, a round shot from the British artillery struck but a little way from his horse's feet, throwing up the earth over his person and then bounding harmlessly away.

This some of the bystanders construed into a confirmation of the prophecy said to have been made by an old Indian who saw him at Braddock's defeat,—"The Great Spirit protects him, he cannot die in battle."

When night came, he lay down in his cloak at the foot of a tree, in the midst of his soldiers, hoping for a general action the next day. But in the morning, Sir Henry Clinton was gone too far for pursuit under such killing heat—the thermometer at 96°. Many on both sides had perished without a wound, from fatigue and thirst.

A ludicrous occurrence varied the incidents of this 28th of June, which Mr. Custis describes as follows:

"The servants of the general officers were usually well armed and mounted. Will Lee, or 'Billy,' the former huntsman and favorite body servant of the general, a square, muscular figure and capital horseman, paraded a corps of valets, and, riding pompously at their head, proceeded to an eminence crowned by a large sycamore tree, from which could be seen an ex-

tensive portion of the field of battle. Here Billy halted, and having unstrung the large telescope he always carried in a leather case, with a martial air applied it to his eye and reconnoitred the enemy. Washington having observed these manœuvres of the corps of valets, pointed them out to his officers, observing, 'See those fellows collecting on yonder heights; the enemy will fire on them to a certainty.' Meanwhile the British were not unmindful of the assemblage on the height, and perceiving a burly figure well mounted and with a telescope in hand, they determined to pay their respects to the group. A shot from a six-pounder passed through the tree, cutting away the limbs, and producing a scampering among the corps of valets, that caused even the countenance of the general-in-chief to relax into a smile."

CHAPTER XXX.

Arrival of Count d'Estaing—Hindrances and disasters—Disagreement between French and American officers—Letter to La Fayette—Impatience of the people—Generosity of La Fayette.

THE arrival of a French fleet, under the command of Count d'Estaing, was the most important occurrence of 1778, and Washington began immediately to contrive ways and means of co-operation which should bring our new allies at once into action.

The first plan was for the fleet to enter New York harbor by Sandy Hook, and attack the British by water, while the army made an onset on the land side. But the Count's heavy frigates would not go over the Bar, so they were sent round to Newport, Rhode Island, where it was intended to make a similar attempt, the British having some vessels of war there, and six thousand troops strongly intrenched. But this plan also failed from various accidents; especially through the damage sustained by the French fleet in a heavy storm. Count d'Estaing was a good deal blamed for the course he pursued on the occasion, and suspected of some sacrifice of the good of the cause he came to aid, be-

cause instead of attacking the ships in the harbor, and so co-operating with General Sullivan who was to be ready on the land-side to second him, he stood out to sea hoping to meet the whole British fleet, which he had some reason to think might be hovering there.

Some very hard things were said by the American officers, which the Count felt deeply; but his conduct on the occasion was such as to shame those who had, in their hasty zeal, forgotten what was due to a gallant and experienced officer, sent by a foreign power to our assistance in the darkest hour of our trial. The Count's first letter on his arrival was expressed in the warmest style:

"I have the honor to inform your Excellency of the arrival of the King's fleet, charged by his Majesty with the glorious task of giving his allies, the United States of America, the most striking proofs of his esteem. If I can succeed in it, nothing will be wanting to my happiness; and this will be augmented by the consideration of concerting my operations with such a general as your Excellency.

"The talents and great actions of General Washington have secured to him, in the eyes of all Europe, the truly sublime title of the liberator of America. Accept, sir, the homage, which every man, especially every military man, owes you; and be not displeased that I solicit, even in the first instance of intercourse, with military and naval frankness, a friendship so flattering as yours. I will endeavor to render myself

worthy of it by my respectful devotion to your country. It is prescribed to me by my orders, and my heart accords with it."

Washington replied in corresponding terms, and left nothing undone to afford the Count both information and co-operation in his attempts; but the Newport plan was a complete failure; the troops who were to reinforce General Sullivan not arriving in time, and the fleet, as we have seen, having been much injured by a storm, and obliged to go to Boston for repairs.

In a letter to a friend, at this stage of affairs, Washington says:

"It is not a little pleasing, nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years' manœuvring and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation, both armies are brought back to the very point they set out from; and that the offending party at the beginning is now reduced to the use of the spade and pickaxe for defence.

"The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations.

"But it will be time enough to turn preacher when my present appointment ceases; and therefore I shall add no more on the doctrine of Providence; but make a tender of my best respects to your good lady, the

secretary, and other friends, and assure you, that, with the most perfect regard, I am, dear sir, &c."

The unhappy difference of opinion between the French and American officers, so warmly and even rudely expressed by the latter, gave Washington a new cause of uneasiness, and involved him in endless annoyings, persuadings and pacifyings.

He writes to La Fayette:

"In one word let me say, I feel every thing that hurts the sensibility of a gentleman, and consequently upon the present occasion I feel for you and for our good and great allies the French. I feel myself hurt, also, at every illiberal and unthinking reflection which may have been cast upon the Count d'Estaing, or the conduct of the fleet under his command; and lastly I feel for my country.

"Let me entreat you, therefore, my dear marquis, to take no exceptions at unmeaning expressions, uttered perhaps without consideration, and in the first transport of disappointed hope. Every body, sir, who reasons, will acknowledge the advantages which we have derived from the French fleet, and the zeal of the commander of it; but in a free and republican government, you cannot restrain the voice of the multitude.

"Every man will speak as he thinks, or, more properly, without thinking, and consequently will judge of effects without attending to the causes. The censures which have been levelled at the officers of the

French fleet, would more than probably have fallen in a much higher degree upon a fleet of our own, if we had one in the same situation. It is the nature of man to be displeased with every thing that disappoints a favorite hope or a flattering project; and it is the folly of too many of them to condemn without investigating circumstances.

"Let me beseech you, therefore, my good sir, to afford a healing hand to the wound that unintentionally has been made.

"America esteems your virtues and your services, and admires the principles upon which you act. Your countrymen in our army look up to you as their patron. The Count and his officers consider you as a man high in rank, and high in estimation here and also in France; and I, your friend, have no doubt but you will use your utmost endeavors to restore harmony; that the honor, glory, and mutual interests of the two nations may be promoted and cemented in the firmest manner.

"I would say more on the subject, but am restrained for the want of time; and therefore shall only add, that, with every sentiment of esteem and regard, I am, my dear marquis, &c."

It cannot but be allowed that the Count d'Estaing behaved throughout, not only in the most gentlemanly but the most gallant manner, and that his name ought to be held in honor by all true Americans.

The officers having drawn up in no measured terms a "Protest" against the sailing of the French fleet from

Newport, Washington exerted his utmost influence in every direction to prevent so unbecoming a paper from being made public.

Count d'Estaing afterwards wrote to General Sullivan, merely noticing the Protest, by saying that it was of such a nature as to impose on the king's squadron the necessity of passing it over in silence, and adding that no offence had been given which would affect his conduct. To prove this, he offered to put himself under General Sullivan's orders, adding—"My opinion upon the measures to be taken need never restrain yours.

"It shall not only be subject to yours, but even remain unrevealed whenever you shall not require me to give it."

"I should not have taken this step," he wrote to Washington, "with the idea of strengthening an army with such a handful of men, nor of proving what is already known, that the French nation can sacrifice life with a good grace; but I was anxious to demonstrate, that my countrymen could not be offended by a sudden expression of feeling; and that he who had the honor of commanding them in America, was and would be at all times one of the most devoted and zealous servants of the United States."

Winter-quarters of 1778–9 were on the west of the Hudson—"Hudson's River," as Washington and all the rest of the world called it, at that time—in detached positions from West Point to Middlebrook, New Jersey.

Washington's head-quarters were established at Middlebrook, where the winter passed quietly, drilling and preparing the troops being the principal military business.

Great projects had been set on foot, very attractive on paper or in imagination, but requiring an amount of men and money that existed for the United States only in cloud-land. The conquest of Canada was only one of these splendid plans. But when the commander-in-chief came to be consulted, grand ideas were necessarily brought in contact with figures, with past experience, the state of the country and the exhausted condition of the military chest,—the paper currency having already begun seriously to depreciate.

Washington spent five anxious weeks at Philadelphia, arguing with Congress on the impracticability of its schemes, risking his own popularity, of course; for the country was hungry for some dashing achievement, and the enemies of the chief perpetually made a handle of his dilatoriness, and held up to ridicule and contempt his steady pursuit of the original idea of wearying out a superior enemy, contemptuously designated by what was once a word of praise—the Fabian policy.

He was quite sensible of this, and suffered under it, for he was Roman enough to be solicitous for the approbation of his fellow-citizens. But he was far more anxious about what he considered the depreciation of Congress, by the withdrawal of those great and noble spirits, to whom was chiefly owing all that had been

done in the cause of Independence. Few of these were now left, and the number of members that attended the deliberations was sometimes reduced to twenty-one. Washington laments this in many letters.

Another trouble was the effort of some nefarious pursuers of selfish gain, to buy up and monopolize certain articles of the first necessity, thus increasing very injuriously the difficulty of providing for the army.

"It is most devoutly to be wished, that some happy expedient could be hit upon to restore credit to our paper emissions, and punish the infamous practice of forestalling and engrossing such articles as are essentially necessary to the very existence of the army, and which, by this means, come to it through the hands of these people at fifty per cent. advance, to the great injury and depreciation of our money, by accumulating the quantum necessary for ordinary purposes to an amazing sum, which must end in a total stagnation of all purchases, unless some remedy can be soon and effectually applied. It is also most devoutly to be wished, that faction was at an end, and that those, to whom every thing dear and valuable is intrusted, would lay aside party views and return to first principles.

"Happy, happy, thrice happy country, if such were the government of it! But, alas! we are not to expect that the path is to be strewed with flowers. That great and good Being who rules the universe has disposed matters otherwise, and for wise purposes I am persuaded."

And again: "It is much to be lamented, that each State long ere this has not hunted them down as pests to society, and the greatest enemies we have to the happiness of America. I would to God, that some one of the most atrocious in each State was hung in gibbets upon a gallows five times as high as the one prepared by Haman. No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man, who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin."

The appointment of so many French officers to American commands, over the heads of those who had borne the brunt of the war, created, naturally, a good deal of dissatisfaction.

Speaking of some French officers who had persuaded an American general to sign certificates written by themselves, General Washington observes, in a letter to Gouverneur Morris, "They are not bad in giving themselves a good character."

After praising Baron Steuben, he breaks out, notwithstanding that eccentric officer's merit, with "I do most devoutly wish, that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts upon very different principles from those which govern the rest." Well might Lafayette be considered an exception to all general rules! such zeal, such disinterested generosity, and such a love of liberty can hardly be paralleled.

Before the battle of Monmouth, when General Lee was excessively opposed to attacking the enemy, he

had, in one of his moods, voluntarily given up the command of the advance to Lafayette, but afterwards changing his mind, desired to resume the post he had relinquished. Washington, sure of Lafayette's generosity, as he was of Lee's troublesome temper, invented an expedient that was calculated to accommodate the difficulty, though it could hardly be satisfactory to either party; putting Lee at the head of the additional brigades, with orders to join the advance, which would of course, as Lee was senior in rank, give him command of the whole. At the same time he wrote thus to his friend:

"CRANBERRY, 26th *June*, 1778.

"MY DEAR MARQUIS,—General Lee's uneasiness on account of yesterday's transaction rather increasing than abating, and your politeness in wishing to ease him of it, have induced me to detach him from this army with a part of it, to reinforce or at least cover the several detachments at present under your command.

"At the same time that I felt for General Lee's distress of mind, I have had an eye to your wishes, and the delicacy of your situation; and have therefore obtained a promise from him, that, when he gives you notice of his approach and command, he will request you to prosecute any plan you may have already concerted for the purpose of attacking or otherwise annoying the enemy. This is the only expedient I could think of to answer the views of both. General Lee

seems satisfied with the measure, and I wish it may prove agreeable to you, as I am, with the warmest wishes for your honor and glory, and with the sincerest esteem and affection, Yours, &c."

Lafayette submitted with all the good-nature that Washington had counted upon, and this was not the only opportunity he had of doing so.

After Lafayette had been sent to Rhode Island in command of a body of regulars and militia, July, 1778, Washington concluded to employ General Greene, who was a native of that State; and in order to do this, it was necessary to divide the troops, thus giving Lafayette only half as many as he had at first commanded.

Lafayette replies to the letter announcing this unwelcome change:

"I have received your Excellency's favor by General Greene, and have been much pleased with the arrival of a gentleman who, not only on account of his merit and the justness of his views, but by his knowledge of the country and his popularity in this State, may be very serviceable to the expedition. I willingly part with half my detachment, since you find it for the good of the service, though I had great dependence on them. Any thing, my dear general, which you shall order, or can wish, will always be infinitely agreeable to me; and I shall always be happy in doing any thing that may please you, or forward the public good."

What a relief amid the cares and trials and eternal disputes and jealousies that wore out Washington's strength and patience, must have been the friendship and support of a soul like this! The sweetness of Lafayette's temper, his inexhaustible vivacity and freshness of interest in public affairs, and the warm affection he manifested, form, altogether, one of the most delightful of characters. Much as his name is revered among us he has never been overrated.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Washington at Philadelphia with Congress—Then in the country hunting squirrels—Devastations of the enemy on Long Island—Capture of Stony Point by General Wayne—Generous conduct of Washington—General Lee's questions—Dinner at West Point—Depreciation of the currency—Kindness of the ladies of Philadelphia.

WASHINGTON remained through the winter and spring of 1779 at head-quarters at Middlebrook, with the exception of five weeks passed in Philadelphia in conference with Congress, of which he says:—"Were I to give way to private conveniency and amusement, I should not be able to resist the invitation of my friends to make Philadelphia, instead of a squeezed up room or two, my quarters for the winter.

"But the affairs of the army require my constant attention and presence, and circumstanced as matters are at this time, call for some degree of care and address to keep it from crumbling. As peace and retirement are my ultimate aim, and the most pleasing and flattering hope of my soul, every thing promotive of this end contributes to my satisfaction, however difficult and inconvenient in the attainment, and will re-

concile any place and all circumstances to my feelings, whilst I continue in service."

Tradition says he did not confine himself so strictly to "a squeezed up room or two," as not to find a little time for his favorite amusement of hunting.

"Come, Cornelius," he would say to a boy of fifteen that used to wait on him, a son of the owner of a house he had occupied, "come, the day is so fine—suppose we see if we can't find some squirrels this morning?" And taking his long rifle, says Cornelius, who is still living to tell the story, the general, with his young companion and guide, would travel off miles in search of a kind of game that would hardly have tempted him far in the fox-hunting days of Mount Vernon.

General Sir Henry Clinton showing every disposition to get command of the Hudson, and having already obtained possession of Stony Point and Verplank's Point, Washington removed to New Windsor, a few miles above West Point, whence the enemy endeavored to seduce him, by devastations on the coast of Long Island Sound, but in vain. "The system of devastation and plunder," says Mr. Sparks, "was vigorously pursued. * * * Dwelling-houses, shops, churches, school-houses, and the shipping in the harbors were destroyed. The soldiers pillaged without restraint, committing acts of violence, and exhibiting the horrors of war in some of their most revolting forms." Washington meanwhile was only watching for an op-

portunity to retake Stony Point, on the Hudson, which was accomplished, under his orders, by General Wayne, on the night of the 15th of July, 1779. Washington, with his usual generosity, in writing to Congress in praise of General Wayne, says:—

"He improved upon the plan suggested by me, and executed it in a manner that does signal honor to his judgment and to his bravery. Every officer and man of the corps deserves great credit; but there were particular ones whose situation placed them foremost in danger, and made their conduct more conspicuous."

The ordnance and other stores taken on this occasion, were estimated at $158,640; which amount was divided among the troops in proportion to the pay of the officers and men.

Three different medals, emblematical of the action, were struck by order of Congress, bearing the names respectively of Wayne, Fleury and Stewart.

General Washington's share was a vote of thanks from Congress, "for the vigilance, wisdom and magnanimity with which he had conducted the military operations of the States, particularly on the occasion of the late attack."

The commander-in-chief now removed to West Point for the remainder of the season.

There was but little of a military nature to enliven his stay there, but he was provided with excitement of a different sort by General Lee, who published anonymously twenty-five "Queries Political and Military,"

calculated both to wound and injure the commander-in-chief. Mr. Sparks quotes a few, by way of specimen :—

"Whether it is salutary or dangerous, consistent with or abhorrent from the spirit and principles of liberty and republicanism, to inculcate and encourage in the people an idea, that their welfare, safety, and glory depend on one man? Whether they really do depend on one man?

"Whether amongst the late warm, or rather loyal addresses of this city (Philadelphia), to his Excellency General Washington, there was a single mortal, one gentleman only excepted, who could possibly be acquainted with his merits.

"Whether the gentleman excepted does really think his Excellency a great man, or whether evidences could not be produced of his thinking quite the reverse?

"Whether the armies under Gates and Arnold, and the detachment under Stark to the northward, or that immediately under his Excellency in Pennsylvania, gave the decisive turn to the fortune of war?"

But envy and malignity were too obvious in these insidious attacks to allow their accomplishing the design of the author, except as far as Washington's feelings were concerned.

A certain letter to Dr. Cochrane, for the information of two ladies who had been invited to head-quarters to dine, shows that he was in tolerable spirits,

sometimes, at least; a mood we suspect, natural to Washington the man, though rare with Washington the commander-in-chief:

"WEST POINT, 16 *August*, 1779.

"DEAR DOCTOR,—I have asked Mrs. Cochrane and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprise them of their fare?

"Since our arrival at this happy spot we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans, or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which, I presume, will be the case to-morrow, we have two beef-steak pies, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing the space, and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which, without them would be near twelve feet apart. Of late, he has had the surprising sagacity to discover, that apples will make pies; and it is a question, if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples, instead of having both of beef-steaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates, once tin, now iron, (not become so by the labor of scouring,) I shall be happy to see them, and am, dear Doctor, yours, &c."

Lafayette, who had already on several occasions

distinguished himself by his bravery and his generosity, was induced by the situation of his own country at this time, as well as by a desire to visit his family, to ask leave of Congress to return to France on furlough; on which occasion several letters passed between General Washington and himself, Lafayette's full of a characteristic ardor, and the graver general's, though more measured, expressing equal affection. One of the latter concludes thus:—

"Whether in the character of an officer at the head of a corps of gallant Frenchmen, if circumstances should require this, whether as a major-general commanding a division of the American army, or whether, after our swords and spears have given place to the ploughshare and pruning-hook, I see you as a private gentleman, a friend and companion, I shall welcome you with all the warmth of friendship to Columbia's shores; and, in the latter case, to my rural cottage, where homely fare and a cordial reception shall be substituted for delicacies and costly living.

"This, from past experience, I know you can submit to; and if the lovely partner of your happiness will consent to participate with us in such rural entertainment and amusements, I can undertake, in behalf of Mrs. Washington, that she will do every thing in her power to make Virginia agreeable to the marchioness. My inclinations and endeavors to do this cannot be doubted, when I assure you, that I love every body that is dear to you."

Sir Henry Clinton was beginning to be very weary of his position. "The precautions," he wrote home to his government, "that General Washington has had leisure to take (he had learned to say *General* Washington now), make me hopeless of bringing him to a general action." And again—"To say truth, my Lord, my spirits are worn out by struggling against the consequences of many adverse incidents, which, without appearing to account for my situation, have effectually oppressed me."

It is now well known that in point of fact, Sir Henry Clinton was by no means alone in his feeling of discouragement. The "Fabian policy" so despised by some aspiring spirits on this side of the water, had produced just the effect General Washington intended it should produce, in wearying the enemy, causing him enormous expense, and putting far off the hope of subduing a people so pertinacious and so patient in their defence. But the obstinacy of George III., and his hatred of the "rebels," knew no relenting.

The French minister, M. Gérard, wrote to his government about this time—"I have had many conversations with General Washington, some of which have continued for three hours. It is impossible for me briefly to communicate the fund of intelligence which I have derived from him. I will now say only, that I have formed as high an opinion of the powers of his mind, his moderation, his patriotism and his virtues, as I had before from common report conceived of his

military talents, and of the incalculable services he has rendered to his country." This was the French opinion, and many a cool-headed and far-seeing Briton was fast coming round to it. The French never knew, probably, how intolerably Washington was provoked by the Count de Grasse's failure to come to New York, to co-operate with Rochambeau and himself in snatching New York from Sir Henry Clinton. This was a darling scheme with the commander-in-chief, and when he found that Count de Grasse declined to unite in it, his anger knew no bounds. Colonel Pickering (who, by the by, seems disposed to make the most of any blemishes discoverable in Washington) says that his attendants withdrew from the room, on what particular account we are not told. But another report says that in the first transport of passion, Washington, forgetting his beloved Lafayette, cried out—"What a fool I was ever to trust a Frenchman!"

We may judge by the few instances made so much of, how rare were the occasions on which the commander-in-chief, ever surrounded by observers, and subject to continual vexations and disappointments, gave the rein to passion, and forgot his habitual self-restraint.

The worst evil of the time was the depreciation of the Continental currency, forty paper dollars being worth only one silver one. So enormous had become the price of provisions under these circumstances, that in providing for the army, who were the greatest sufferers, Congress was obliged to demand from each

State the contribution of beef, pork, flour and other necessaries, to be lodged in convenient depots, subject to the order of the commander-in-chief. But this plan proved a failure, both on account of the opportunity for delay and dishonesty which it afforded, and because of the expense of transportation. The army was worse off than ever, and the project of paying in kind was abandoned.

There were several associations of ladies formed in the different States, who interested themselves in behalf of the army, and wished to know of the commander-in-chief how they might most usefully expend the money they had collected. He always begged them to furnish shirts.

"To PRESIDENT REED.

"HEAD-QUARTERS, WHIPPANY, 25 *June*, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,—I very much admire the patriotic spirit of the ladies of Philadelphia, and shall with great pleasure give them my advice, as to the application of their benevolent and generous donation to the soldiers of the army. Although the terms of the association seem in some measure to preclude the purchase of any article which the public is bound to find, I would nevertheless recommend a provision of shirts, in preference to any thing else, in case the fund should amount to a sum equivalent to a supply of eight or ten thousand.

"The soldiers are exceedingly in want of them, and

the public have never, for several years past, been able to procure a sufficient quantity to make them comfortable. They are, besides, more capable of an equal and satisfactory distribution than almost any other article. Should the fund fall short of a supply of the number of shirts I have mentioned, perhaps there could be no better application of the money, than laying it out in the purchase of refreshments for the hospitals.

"These are my ideas at present. When I have the pleasure of hearing more particularly from Mrs. Reed, I shall be able to form a more complete opinion."

The States now passed laws making paper money a legal tender, even in case of debts contracted before the paper had been created. In spite of the dishonorableness, not to say dishonesty, involved in such transactions, many were found mean enough to take advantage of the law to pay old debts in the depreciated currency.

What Washington thought of this practice, may be imagined from the warmth of his remarks on it in his own case:—

"The fear of injuring, by any example of mine, the credit of our paper currency, if I attempted to discriminate between the real and nominal value of paper money, has already sunk for me a large sum. If it be customary with others to receive money in this way, that is, sixpence or one shilling in the pound for old debts; if it is thought to be promotive of the great

cause we are embarked in for individuals to do so, ruining themselves while others are reaping the benefit of such distress; if the law imposes this, and it is thought right to submit, I will not say aught against it, nor oppose another word to it. No man has gone, and no man will go further to serve the public than myself. If sacrificing my whole estate would effect any valuable purpose, I would not hesitate one moment in doing it. But my submitting in matters of this kind, unless the same is done by others, is no more than a drop in the bucket. In fact, it is not serving the public, but enriching individuals and countenancing dishonesty; for sure I am, that no honest man would attempt to pay twenty shillings with one, or perhaps half of one. In a word, I had rather make a present of the bonds than receive payment of them in so shameful a way."

Mr. Sparks relates an incident in point:—

"When the army was at Morristown, a man of respectable standing lived in the neighborhood, who was assiduous in his civilities to Washington, which were kindly received and reciprocated.

"Unluckily this man paid his debts in the depreciated currency. Some time afterwards he called at head-quarters, and was introduced as usual to the general's apartment, where he was then conversing with some of his officers. He bestowed very little attention upon the visitor. The same thing occurred a second time, when he was more reserved than before. This was so different from his customary manner, that La-

fayette, who was present on both occasions, could not help remarking it, and he said, after the man was gone, 'General, this man seems to be much devoted to you, and yet you have scarcely noticed him.'

"Washington replied, smiling, 'I know I have not been cordial; I tried hard to be civil, and attempted to speak to him several times, but that Continental money stopped my mouth.'"

CHAPTER XXXII.

Sufferings of the troops—Treachery of Arnold—Capture and death of Major André—Letter to Mr. Laurens—Mutiny of the Pennsylvania line—Its suppression by lenity—Mutiny of the New Jersey line—Severity on this occasion—Letter to Dr. Franklin.

Both British and Americans now standing on the defensive, and closely watching each other's movements, General Washington, who had been for a while on the east side of the Hudson, intending to attack Sir Henry Clinton in New York if any feasible opportunity presented itself, recrossed the river and encamped near Tappan. His troops, he says himself, "both officers and men," were sometimes "almost perishing for want, alternately without bread or meat, with a very scanty allowance of either—frequently destitute of both." "Our affairs," he says, "are in so deplorable a condition on the score of provisions, as to fill the mind with the most anxious fears. Men half-starved, imperfectly clothed, and robbing the country people of their subsistence from sheer necessity." Such was his terrible picture, and the ground of his incessant urgency with Congress and with the governors of the several States.

In 1780 Benedict Arnold, who had, in many instances during the war, proved himself a brave soldier, though his character in other respects had not been spotless, had charge of the important fortress at West Point and other posts commanding the Highlands. On these depended the communications between the different portions of the army, as well as with the country northward, from which large quantities of supplies were to be drawn for its use.

Arnold's capacity as a soldier could not be doubted, and no one had dreamed that the faults of his private character were such as would be likely to interfere with his duty as a military commander. He was no worse than the great Duke of Marlborough, one of the most successful of modern generals, whom he resembled in some respects. Love of money and a general selfishness were his great faults, and they were of a kind to look particularly odious in a commander, at a time when so many men were perilling all in the service of their country at her utmost need.

Arnold had been brought to trial, for some alleged want of integrity, while in command at Philadelphia after General Howe's evacuation, and the disgrace he then suffered probably rankled in his mind. At any rate, it is now well known, though then so little suspected, that he had in September, 1780, been *fifteen months* in correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton, with a view of betraying his country; and that he had sought the command of West Point and its dependencies, for

the very purpose of doing this in the most effectual manner.

General Washington had gone to Hartford, Connecticut, to confer with the Count de Rochambeau, who had just arrived from France with troops for the service of the United States. General Greene was left in command during Washington's absence. This was judged a favorable opportunity for putting into operation the treacherous scheme which had been so long concocting.

André came up the river in the Vulture sloop-of-war as far as Haverstraw Bay, and, by appointment with Arnold, landed on the west side of the river, where the traitor awaited him. This was in darkness, as was fitting; and at dawn, Arnold persuaded André to go to a house not far off, where he could lie concealed during the day. The villain then went quietly back to West Point, and took his usual place among honest men and faithful soldiers, without a blush. What was gnawing at his heart, we can only guess.

Major André, with his life in his hand, and risking it for what he considered his duty to his sovereign, committed an error in laying off his regimentals at the house where he had been concealed, and putting on a citizen's dress, the better to conceal his character in case he should be taken.

According to the usages of war, this may be said to have cost him his life, or at least rendered it impossible to save him when he came to trial; because in his

military dress he might have been, by lenient construction, considered only as a prisoner of war, while the disguise branded him at once as a spy.

The following morning, Major André set off alone on horseback for New York, and while on his way, thinking himself safe under the disguise of "John Anderson," he was met and stopped by three young men of the militia, Paulding, Van Wart, and Williams, who searched him, and found papers in his boots. These papers were from General Arnold, and contained an exact account of the works at West Point, and other things that would be of advantage to the enemy.

The young men committed their prisoner to the custody of Lieutenant-colonel Jameson, who, perfectly bewildered and beside his judgment, sent a messenger immediately to Arnold, informing him of the capture, while he despatched an express with the papers found on the person of André, to the commander-in-chief, then supposed to be on the road returning from Hartford.

Poor André behaved like a man through all the sad scenes that followed. His accomplishments, his amiable character, and his graceful manners excited universal interest, and nothing was left untried to save him. It is said that Washington even tried to have Arnold stolen away from Sir Henry Clinton, in New York, in order that he might be able to send back André in exchange—but all was unavailing. The last request of the gallant officer was that he might be spared

the rope, and die a soldier's death. But even this the stern laws of war forbade. A court-martial sentenced him, and Washington signed the death-warrant. Head-quarters at Tappan will always have a sad interest, from the circumstance that Major André there met his grievous fate.

That General Washington suffered severely under the necessity which obliged him, by the rules of war, to sanction the decision of the court-martial in this case, we have ample testimony; and an eye-witness still living observed, that when the windows of the town were thronged with gazers at the stern procession as it passed, those of the commander-in-chief were entirely closed, and his house without sign of life except the two sentinels at the door.

Mr. Sparks says:—"There was no stronger trait in the character of Washington than humanity; the misfortunes and sufferings of others touched him keenly; and his feelings were deeply moved at the part he was compelled to act in consenting to the death of André; yet justice to the office he held, and to the cause for which his countrymen were shedding their blood, left him no alternative."

Only one more proof what a horrible thing is war!

The commander-in-chief wrote as follows, in answer to his friend Henry Laurens:

"HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS, *Oct.* 18*th*, 1780.

"MY DEAR LAURENS,—In no instance since the com-

mencement of the war, has the interposition of Providence appeared more remarkably conspicuous than in the rescue of the post and garrison of West Point from Arnold's villainous perfidy. How far he meant to involve me in the catastrophe of this place, does not appear by any indubitable evidence; and I am rather inclined to think he did not wish to hazard the more important object of his treachery, by attempting to combine two events, the less of which might have marred the greater. A combination of extraordinary circumstances, an unaccountable deprivation of presence of mind in a man of the first abilities, and the virtue of three militia men, threw the adjutant-general of the British forces, with full proof of Arnold's treachery, into our hands. But for the egregious folly, or the bewildered conception, of Lieutenant-colonel Jameson, who seemed lost in astonishment, and not to know what he was doing, I should undoubtedly have got Arnold. André has met his fate, and with that fortitude which was to be expected from an accomplished man and gallant officer; but I am mistaken, if at this time, 'Arnold is undergoing the torment of a mental hell.' *

"He wants feeling. From some traits of his character, which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse."

* Quoting the words of Mr. Laurens in a letter to which this is a reply

The consequences which General Washington had long predicted, of the personal privations, amounting to distress, suffered by the army, came out in a very alarming shape on New-Year's night, 1781. An extract from a circular letter, from the commander-in-chief to the governors of several States tells the story.

"It is with extreme anxiety and pain of mind I find myself constrained to inform your Excellency, that the event I have long apprehended would be the consequence of the complicated distresses of the army, has at length taken place.

"On the night of the 1st instant, a mutiny was excited by the non-commissioned officers and privates of the Pennsylvania line, which soon became so universal as to defy all opposition. In attempting to quell this tumult in the first instance, some officers were killed, others wounded, and the lives of several common soldiers lost. Deaf to the arguments, entreaties, and utmost efforts of all their officers to stop them, they moved off from Morristown, the place of their cantonment, with their arms and six pieces of artillery. And, from accounts just received by General Wayne's aide-de-camp, they were still in a body on their march to Philadelphia to demand a redress of their grievances. At what point this defection will stop, or how extensive it may prove, God only knows.

"At present the troops at the important posts in this vicinity remain quiet, not being acquainted with this alarming and unhappy affair; but how long they

will remain so cannot be ascertained, as they labor under some of the same pressing hardships as the troops who have revolted.

"The aggravated calamities and distresses that have resulted from the total want of pay for nearly twelve months, the want of clothing at a severe season, and not unfrequently the want of provisions, are beyond description. The circumstances will now point out much more forcibly what ought to be done, than any thing that can possibly be said by me on the subject."

General Washington, considering the apology the men had for their desperate conduct, was in favor of great leniency towards them. He advised General Wayne to encourage them to make a proper statement of their grievances, and promised to represent the case faithfully to Congress and the State of Pennsylvania, and endeavor to obtain redress.

These judicious counsels had the effect desired. A committee of Congress, joined by the President of Pennsylvania, met the revolters at Trenton, made proposals to them which were accepted, and they gave up their arms.

But the evil did not stop here. So alarming were the symptoms of revolt at Morristown, that General Washington did not dare leave head-quarters, lest advantage should be taken of even a short absence.

The great fear was, in these cases, that overtures from the enemy would be urged upon the mutineers, which discontent and fear combined might induce them

to accept. But the poor fellows had no idea of this. It was hunger and nakedness that drove them mad, not want of patriotism. General Wayne writes of them—

"About four o'clock yesterday morning we were waked by two sergeants, who produced a letter from the enemy, enclosed in a small piece of *tea-lead*. They also brought under guard two caitiffs, who had undertaken to deliver it to the leaders of the malcontents.

"The soldiers in general affect to spurn at the idea of turning *Arnolds*, as they express it."

But on the 22d of January, three weeks after the first revolt had been treated with so much mildness and consideration, we have another circular letter with bad news:

"I have received the disagreeable intelligence, that a part of the Jersey line had followed the example of that of Pennsylvania; and when the advices came away, it was expected the revolt would be general. The precise intention of the mutineers was not known, but their complaints and demands were similar to those of the Pennsylvanians."

Persuaded that, without some decisive effort at all hazards to suppress this dangerous spirit, it would speedily infect the whole army, General Washington ordered as large a detachment as could be spared from other posts to march under Major-general Howe, with orders to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission; to listen to no terms while they were in a state of resistance; and, on their reduction, to execute

instantly a few of the most active and incendiary leaders.

Six hundred men were marched from Morristown to Ringwood, through mountain roads, in deep snow, and, arriving in the night, surrounded the mutineers and brought them to terms.

"Some seemed willing to comply, but others exclaimed, 'What! No conditions? Then if we are to die, it is as well to die where we are as any where else.' Some hesitation appearing among them, Colonel Sprout was directed to advance, and only five minutes were given the mutineers to comply with the orders, which had been sent to them. This had its effect, and they, to a man, marched without arms to the ground appointed for them. The Jersey officers gave a list of those whom they thought the most atrocious offenders, upon which I desired them to select three (one of each regiment), which was accordingly done. A field court-martial was presently held, and they received sentence of death by the unanimous decree of the court."

Two were executed on the spot, the other reprieved as not so guilty as his fellows. In the general orders of January 30th, "The general returns his thanks to Major-general Howe for the judicious measures he pursued, and to the officers and men under his command, for the good conduct and alacrity with which they executed his orders for suppressing the late mutiny in a part of the Jersey line. It gave him inexpressible pain to be obliged to employ their arms upon such an occa-

sion, and he is convinced that they themselves felt all the reluctance which former affection to fellow-soldiers could inspire.

"The general is deeply sensible of the sufferings of the army. He leaves no expedient unessayed to relieve them, and he is persuaded Congress and the several States are doing every thing in their power for the same purpose."

The hardships and sufferings of war receive their most striking comment in such occurrences as this. To be starved and frozen, yet forced to suffer in silence! We conclude a notice of the campaign of 1780, in the words of Washington himself, in a short letter to Dr. Franklin.

"BERGEN COUNTY, N. J., *Oct.* 11*th*, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,—I was very much obliged by the letter, which you did me the honor to write by our amiable young friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, whose exertions to serve this country in his own, are additional proofs of his zealous attachment to our cause, and have endeared him to us still more. He came out flushed with expectations of a decisive campaign, and fired with hopes of acquiring fresh laurels; but in both he has been disappointed; for we have been condemned to an inactivity as inconsistent with the situation of our affairs, as with the ardor of his temper.

"I am sensible of all I owe you, my dear sir, for your sentiments of me; and while I am happy in your

esteem, I cannot but wish for occasions of giving you marks of mine.

"The idea of making a tour together, which you suggest, after the war, would be one of the strongest motives I could have to postpone my plan of retirement and make a visit to Europe, if my domestic habits, which seem to acquire strength from restraint, did not tell me I shall find it impossible to resist them longer than my duty to the public calls for the sacrifice of my inclinations.

"I doubt not you are so fully informed by Congress of our political and military state, that it would be superfluous to trouble you with any thing relating to either.

"If I were to speak on topics of this kind, it would be to show that our present situation makes one of two things essential to us, a peace, or the most vigorous aid of our allies, particularly in the article of money. Of their disposition to serve us we cannot doubt; their generosity will do every thing their means will permit. With my best wishes for the preservation of your useful life, and for every happiness that can attend you, which a sincere attachment can dictate, I am, &c."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Co-operation of the French fleet and army—Arnold's ravages in Virginia—Lafayette operating against Lord Cornwallis there—Story of Morgan—The French fleet sails for the Chesapeake—Washington, going to the seat of war with Count Rochambeau, visits Mount Vernon for the first time since June, 1775.

THE English fleet under Admiral Arbuthnot, and the French one under M. Destouches, M. de Tilly and the Count de Rochambeau, spent several months of 1781 trying to circumvent and supersede each other, with various success, the elements several times interfering with a power that neither could withstand. Newport and the Chesapeake were alternately the theatre of operations, Washington's judgment inclining toward the latter as the more advantageous of the two.

Perhaps the circumstance that the detested traitor, Arnold, was proving the entireness of his own allegiance by devastating Virginia, had something to do with the preference; for who can doubt that the American officers were burning to bring to justice the villain who had dishonored them all? Washington sent Lafayette, who had returned from France after doing all

he could for us there, with twelve hundred men to co-operate with the French fleet against Arnold; but not finding the fleet, the Marquis was obliged to seek another object, which he found in acting in concert with General Greene, further south.

It is almost enough to make us in love with riches, to see how nobly they may be used by noble spirits. Lafayette, finding the troops under his command suffering as usual for lack of suitable clothing, and the States more careless than ever of the wants of the army, since the French allies had come to take a share of the work, pledged his own credit for a proper supply, and had the satisfaction of seeing his men comfortable, and of receiving from Washington the warmest commendation.

An instance connected with Lafayette's operations in the south is related by Mr. Sparks, which is too beautiful to be omitted.*

* After Cornwallis had arrived at York, and commenced his fortifications, Lafayette asked of Colonel Barber if he knew of a trusty, capable soldier, whom he could send as a spy into Cornwallis's camp. He answered that there was one in the New Jersey line by the name of Morgan, who was in all respects suited to such an enterprise. The general sent for him, and told him that he had a very difficult task to propose to him, which was, that he should pretend to desert, go over to the British camp and enlist as a soldier. Morgan answered that he was ready to do any thing in the service of his country, and oblige his general, but that his feelings revolted at such a proposal.

He must assume the character of a spy, and, if detected, he would not only lose his life, but bring a lasting disgrace upon his name.

He desired the reputation of a good soldier, and a zealous, true lover of his country, but he could not endure the thoughts of being a spy. After some conversation, however, he told the general that he would go, on

Arnold still continued his ravages in Virginia, burning peaceful towns and doing whatever is meanest and most cruel in war, for in "civilized" war, armies only fight against armies, not against unarmed inhabitants. Meanwhile a British man-of-war sailed up the broad and beautiful Potomac, the haunt of salmon and wild fowl, hitherto unroused by any sound more warlike than the pop of the sportsman's gun, and, as had been predicted some time before, made straight for the secluded, rural home of the commander-in-chief, and demanded supplies as the price of sparing the house and property. Mr. Lund Washington, forgetting in the hurry and agitation of the moment the position and sentiments of the man he served, timidly conceded the provisions and forage they required, and congratulated himself,

one condition, which was, that, in case any disaster should happen to him, the general should make the true state of the case known, and have the particulars published in the New Jersey gazettes, that no reproach might come upon his family and friends for his supposed misconduct.

To this the general assented. Morgan joined the British camp and enlisted.

Lafayette left every thing to his discretion, but told him he wished intelligence of important movements, and moreover desired the impression particularly to be given, that he had boats enough to transport all his army across James River. Morgan had been a little time in camp, when Lord Cornwallis sent for him and asked him many questions. Tarleton was with him at the time, and inquired of Morgan among other things how many boats General Lafayette had on the river. He said he did not know the exact number, but he had been told there were enough to carry over all the army at a moment's warning. "There," exclaimed Cornwallis to Tarleton, "I told you this would not do," from which it appeared that they had a project in view.

The French fleet in the meantime arrived. General Lafayette had been out to reconnoitre, and when he returned he found six men in the British

no doubt, on seeing the enemy depart, without leaving behind him, as he so often did, a smoking ruin.

But now came the time of reckoning. The agent must sit down and write an account of the transaction to the commander-in-chief; must tell him, not only that the enemy had threatened an attack, for that would have been nothing wonderful; not that they had withdrawn without proceeding to extremities, which might have excited some surprise; but that he, Lund Washington,—namesake if not kinsman of the champion of Freedom and foe of British assumption,—had bought off the invader by contributions of free-born pigs and chickens, and beeves fattened on the soil of Liberty!

It was a hard task, and he made as good a story of it as he could, but hear the reply:—

"I am very sorry to hear of your loss; I am a little sorry to hear of my own; but that which gives me

uniform and one green-coated Hessian at his quarters; and among them was Morgan.

"Well, Morgan" asked the general, with surprise, "whom have you got here?" "Five British soldiers who have deserted with me, and a Hessian whom we captured at the outpost," was the reply. He went on to say, that as the French fleet had arrived, and he presumed his services could no longer be of any use to his general in the British camp, he had returned, and these deserters and this prisoner were the fruits of his expedition.

The general sent for Morgan the next day, and told him that his conduct had been in the highest degree meritorious, and that he proposed to make him a sergeant. Morgan listened to the proposal, and said he was highly gratified to have pleased his commander, but declined the promotion. He added that he believed himself a good soldier, but that he was by no means certain he should make a good sergeant; that he joined the army from a principle of duty and patriotism, because he believed his

most concern is, that you should go on board the enemy's vessels, and furnish them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard, that, in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid the plantation in ruins.

"You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration. It was not in your power, I acknowledge, to prevent them from sending a flag on shore, and you did right to meet it; but you should, in the same instant that the business of it was unfolded, have declared explicitly, that it was improper for you to yield to the request; after which, if they had proceeded to help themselves by force, you could but have submitted; and being unprovided with defence,

country needed his services, and the same motives induced him to prefer a station where he was satisfied he should be the most useful. The general then offered him money, but this he refused also, saying his circumstances were such at home, that he did not need money.

"What then can I do for you?" inquired the general. "I have one favor to ask," replied Morgan; "during my absence some person has taken my gun. I set a great value upon it, and, if it can be restored, it will give me particular pleasure."

The gun was described, and the general issued an order requiring it to be returned. This was all the reward that Morgan could ever be prevailed on to accept.

The above anecdote was related to me by General Lafayette himself nearly fifty years after the event, with much warmth of feeling and admiration of the soldier's magnanimity.

this was to be preferred to a feeble opposition, which only serves as a pretext to burn and destroy."

Speaking of the circumstances to Lafayette, who had been shocked at its inconsistency, and written him a letter on the subject, Washington suggests some excuses for his agent, who was also his friend:

"A false idea, arising from the consideration of his being my steward, and in that character more the trustee and guardian of my property than the representative of my honor, has misled his judgment and plunged him into error, upon the appearance of desertion among my negroes, and danger to my buildings; for sure I am, that no man is more firmly opposed to the enemy than he is. From a thorough conviction of this, and of his integrity, I intrusted every species of my property to his care, without reservation or fear of his abusing it. The last paragraph of my letter to him was occasioned by an expression of his fear, that all the estates convenient to the river would be stripped of their negroes and movable property."

In July, 1781, there were grand preparations for a descent upon New York, by the combined armies of France and the United States, the former commanded by Count Rochambeau and the Duke de Lauzun, the latter by General Washington and General Lincoln. Both armies took position about Kingsbridge and Harlem, but in consequence of various unfavorable circumstances, fell back as far as Dobbs' Ferry, where they lay six weeks, awaiting a favorable opportunity. But

their troops were too few and ill-conditioned, and the French fleet could not join them, being far inferior in force to the British, the strength of which gave the enemy an incalculable advantage in all land operations at this period; so the plan proved abortive. Count de Grasse, with a large fleet and more than three thousand men, was in the West Indies, and Washington earnestly desired that he should sail for Sandy Hook, and attack the British by sea, which would have enabled the land forces to accomplish their plan of recovering New York.

But before the despatch to this effect had time to reach the French admiral, a letter was received from him, announcing that he was about to sail, with his entire force, for the Chesapeake. This changed the whole plan. The armies, French and American, set out at once for Virginia, leaving only men enough behind to secure the passes of the Hudson. Lord Cornwallis was still in Virginia, and Lafayette counteracting him as far as possible. The American troops were not very willing to march so far southward, and some of them would have stopped at Philadelphia, if Robert Morris, that patriotic financier, who, like the genii of Arabian story, always produced gold when it was needed, found for them a month's pay in hard money, when hard money was not to be had except by borrowing it on his own personal credit. Washington and Rochambeau, in advance of the army, stopped at Mount Vernon, but only for a few hours. They then pushed for-

ward to join Lafayette, whom they found near Williamsburg, Virginia, on the 14th of September.

Washington looking upon his beloved home again after more than six years absence—six years of toil and anxiety, of glory and disappointment—what an hour of emotion, of reminiscence, of longing! Here is the bounteous old mansion with its flagged piazza, worn with his pacing footsteps; its hospitable rooms, its quiet library, its sweeping colonnades, its abundant garden. Here, too, are the lawns and shrubberies cared for and beautified so fondly by their master's hands. On the roof of the house is a cupola, from which to enjoy the more extended prospect offered by the broad Potomac and both its shores of gently swelling hills, crowned with woods as far as the eye can see, and fading away in the distance as the river widens into an arm of the great ocean. Here all, all these, and a thousand charms more, every one endeared by life-long habit, and the hope of quiet closing days to be passed among them.

How pleasant to have detained the French commander a few days, while in the midst of softly waving woods and waters and the comforts of domestic life, the din of war might be forgotten!

And the wife! Shall we blame her if she thought it hard that her husband must mount and away before she had time to question him a little even of his own welfare and his plans and hopes for the future? Her lot was hard; six summers in succession she had been

separated from him, all the while knowing that he was exposed to the perils of deadly strife, and that he would avoid none of them, for his own sake or even for hers. Here he had, unannounced, darted into his home, like the first sunbeam after a storm, only to disappear again under as black a cloud as any of those that had brought the thunder. He had come but to tell her that he was on his way to seek a battle, an unequal though glorious contest, from which he might never return.

But the cloud had a silver lining.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Capitulation of Yorktown—British troops lay down their arms—Generous sentiments—Cautions of Washington—Moderation in victory—Joy and gratitude of the nation—Death of Mr. John Parke Custis.

Lord Cornwallis, whom Lafayette had been harassing on every side, found himself, only a few days after this flying visit of Washington to his home, out-generalled and penned up in Yorktown, and hotly besieged by the combined forces; and on the 17th of October demanded a parley, and signified his determination to surrender the fortifications of Yorktown and Gloucester, one on each side of York River.

The terms sketched by Lord Cornwallis not meeting General Washington's views, the general in his turn proposed articles of capitulation, which were acceded to by the British general.

The articles of capitulation were signed on the 19th of October, and in the afternoon of that day the garrisons marched out and surrendered their arms.

The whole number of prisoners, exclusive of seamen, was somewhat over seven thousand men; and the

British loss during the siege was between five and six hundred. The combined army employed in the siege consisted of about seven thousand American regular troops, upwards of five thousand French, and four thousand militia. The loss in killed and wounded was about three hundred.

The land forces surrendered to General Washington and became prisoners to Congress; but the seamen, ships and naval equipments, were assigned to the French admiral.

General Washington thus announces the capture to the President of Congress:

"HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR YORK, 19th *Oct.* 1781.

"SIR,—I have the honor to inform Congress, that a reduction of the British army, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, is most happily effected. The unremitted ardor which actuated every officer and soldier in the combined army on this occasion, has principally led to this important event, at an earlier period than my most sanguine hopes had induced me to expect.

"The singular spirit of emulation, which animated the whole army from the first commencement of our operations, has filled my mind with the highest pleasure and satisfaction, and had given me the happiest presages of success."

He also expresses, very warmly, his obligations to the French officers and his sense of the merits of his own men.

Here was sunshine indeed. A success so great, so rapid and so unexpected cheered the land from one extremity to the other. The siege and surrender of Yorktown, shook the country like the loudest clap of thunder, herald of the storm's departure. All felt that brighter skies were preparing, and the universal joy did not wait the sanction of a deliberate treaty of peace. The great game of chess which had been so warily played with living men for pawns, was now nearly decided, if not closed by a final checkmate. Congress and the people felt as if the stunning blow had been given—as if the long agony was over. There was a touch of wildness in the national joy, showing how deep had been the previous despondency. Watchmen woke the citizens of Philadelphia at one o'clock in the morning, with the cry—"Cornwallis is taken!" Sober, puritan America was startled from her habitual coolness. The chief alone, on whom had fallen the heaviest stress of the long contest, was calm and serious. He felt that a great deal was yet to be done.

In the orders for the day is the following direction:

"Divine service is to be performed to-morrow in the several brigades and divisions.

"The commander-in-chief earnestly recommends, that the troops not on duty should universally attend, with that seriousness of deportment and gratitude of heart, which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demands of us."

The thanks of Congress were presented to each of

the commanders and to all the other officers and soldiers. Counts de Grasse and de Rochambeau received each two pieces of the English cannon, and General Washington two stands of colors taken at Yorktown.

Colonel Tilghman, who bore the victorious news to Congress, was complimented with a fine horse and an elegant sword; and a marble column was ordered to be erected at Yorktown in commemoration of the surrender. Washington spared no thanks to his excellent friends the French, and even went on board the admiral's ship to pay his compliments, to present as a personal gift from himself a pair of very fine horses, and to concert measures for following up the victory effectually. In the latter object he was not successful, as the Count de Grasse had engagements which called him elsewhere.

Scarcely had the capitulation been signed, when Washington left Yorktown, summoned by express to the dying bed of his step-son, Mr. Custis, a young man of twenty-eight, the "Master Jackey" of Mount Vernon's early days. This gentleman, who had married Miss Nelly Calvert, had been seized with a fever, and lay at a friend's house at Eltham, where his afflicted wife and mother were watching over him, hourly expecting his dissolution when Washington arrived. This was one of those occasions upon which Washington is said to have exhibited an amount of affectonate feeling which some have considered him incapable of. He looked on the young man, Mrs. Washington's only son, called thus

early to leave a beloved wife and four infant children, and he wept like a woman, promising with all the emphasis of his strong nature to be henceforth a father to the little ones, which he truly was, ever after.

Perhaps Providence sent this home-grief to temper the joy of so unexpected a termination of the long, weary struggle.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The sufferings of the army tempt some men to treasonous thoughts—The indignation of Washington and his rebuke—Pacification of the troops—News of PEACE—Persons still living who remember those times—Washington travels in Western New York—The British evacuate New York—Washington takes leave of his companions in arms—Returns his commission to Congress.

In May, 1782, a very well written paper was handed to Washington, which, after enlarging warmly on the wrongs of the army, and offering some very severe criticisms on the measures of Congress, went on to pass judgment on the various forms of government, coming at last to the conclusion that a republic is of all others the least reliable, and that it was a mistake to think that the American States could ever prosper under that form. English constitutional monarchy was decided to be the most promising, and thus far the most successful, experiment in government, and the one most likely to be adopted by America upon due deliberation. The letter goes on to designate Washington as the suitable head for such a government, and to propose for him the title of King.

The paper was the production of Colonel Nicola, an

officer of respectability, on terms of intimacy with the commander-in-chief, with whom he had often conferred on the affairs of the army. He is supposed to have been merely the organ of others on this occasion. A copy of Washington's reply is extant in his own handwriting, with the certificate of two secretaries on the same paper :—

"The foregoing is an exact copy of a letter, which we sealed and sent off to Colonel Nicola, at the request of the writer of it.

"D. Humphreys, A. D. C.,
"Jonathan Trumbull, Jun.,
"Secretary."

"To Colonel Lewis Nicola.

"Newburg, 22*d May*, 1782.

"Sir,—With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal.

"Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. For the present the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country.

"If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and, as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion.

"Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature.

"I am, sir, your most obedient servant."

But this transaction was never alluded to during the period when the murmurs of the army and the awful dread of worse evils to come, wrung the heart of Washington, and obliged him to become a second time, under God, the saviour of his country. The quietness with which he crushed in embryo a mighty insurrection can never be over-praised.

Less brilliant than some of his other exploits, it was perhaps, in the qualities it evinced and in the im-

portance of its consequences, the greatest of all. A body of men with arms in their hands, with real wrongs to stimulate their passions, wrought up to the last point of self-control by artful and specious addresses, made but too ready material for mad doings. There was an anonymous call for a meeting of officers. This coming to the ears of the commander-in-chief, he at once called another meeting, and for an earlier day. Before that day arrived, he had sent for many of the officers separately, to his private room, and it was observed that some of them left him with the traces of tears upon their cheeks.

The meeting called by General Washington took place as appointed, General Gates in the chair.

The commander-in-chief, much agitated, arose, with a paper in his hand containing the address he had prepared. As he looked around the assembly, and his eye fell upon one and another of his old companions in arms, men who with him had borne the burden and heat of the day, memory was too much for him; he faltered and could not see clearly to read his notes. As soon as he recovered himself he said in his quiet way, taking at the same time his glasses from his pocket, "I have grown gray in your service, and now I am growing blind, but I never doubted the justice of my country or its gratitude."

A thrill ran through the assembly. What could better have prepared every heart to listen to him with reverential affection?

His address, read with deep feeling, was noble, fatherly, wise. Our limits forbid us to quote from it, but every American should study it if he would know how to love and honor Washington.

He retired as soon as he had finished, and resolutions were passed by the meeting expressive of the most ardent affection for him and determination to abide by his wishes.

To the President of Congress Washington wrote:

"The result of the proceedings of the grand convention of officers, which I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of patriotism which could have been given by men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army; and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude, of their country."

Not one word of his own share in the matter.

News of peace came very soon after the noble pacification at Newburg. Joyful news! every heart leapt at thought of the blessed change. The capitulation at Yorktown had been virtually the close of hostilities, but the obstinate temper of George III. seemed likely to prolong the contest indefinitely. Now all was settled and secure. The treaty of peace had been signed at Paris, and on the 19th of April, 1783, precisely eight years from the day when the first blood was shed at Lexington, the proclamation of peace was read at the head of every regiment and corps of the army, after

which the chaplains of the several brigades, by direction of the commander-in-chief, offered public thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, "particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among nations."

The joy with which the news of peace was hailed is evident from a letter, now before me, from Washington to Governor Clinton, announcing the event.

"HEAD-QUARTERS, *March 27th*, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—I take the first moment of forwarding to your Excellency the dispatches from the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, which accompany this. They contain, I presume, all the intelligence respecting PEACE, on which great and glorious event permit me to congratulate you with the greatest sincerity.

"With the most perfect respect, I have the honor
"to be, dear sir, your Excellency's most
"humble servant,
"GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"HIS EXCELLENCY GOV. CLINTON."

This letter, venerably yellow, is addressed,—

ON PUBLIC SERVICE.

To His Excellency Governor George Clinton.

PEACE.

The word *peace* dashed on in large characters by

Washington himself, in a way that lets us into the feelings of the moment.

The long struggle was now over. Peace had dawned over the weary land where civil discord and bloody retribution had so long held sway. No more to be stigmatized as rebels, the people of the United States had become free and independent citizens, amenable only to God and to themselves, and in a position of equality with the great nations of the earth. The change cannot be conceived by us who have known our country only in its days of power and prosperity; but there still remain among us those whose memories are faithful to the aspect of the darkest days. So rapid has been our transition from infant weakness and uncertainty of life, to full-grown potency and self-reliance, that not a few of the men and women who remember all the horrors of war—the starvation, the nakedness, the arraying of brother against brother, the midnight cannon, the flames of burning villages, the slaughter of women and children, are still living at this moment, able to describe what they saw and felt, while they look around upon nothing that can remind them of those disastrous times, except by contrast. What can be more interesting than a contemporary of Washington? The very sight of such a relic of those heavy days, still able to recount what he saw and heard, warms one's patriotism, and calls up the remembrance, too often dormant, of what our fathers suffered for us. All we enjoy, all we boast of, was won by immense sacri-

fices, cold night-watches, marches tracked with blood, ghastly wounds, deaths in solitude and anguish, unpitied and unknown. We may look upon the graves of our deliverers without full sense of what we owe them; but we cannot coldly pass by the living witness, the monumental man, bearing, like the pillar of the Nile, the inscriptions of the past for the instruction and use of the future. More than one lady of the "Republican Court" is still enjoying, in the evening of life, recollections of the keen interest, the exciting novelties, the simple splendors of that glorious time, serving as stars to light and cheer a path that might otherwise be sad. Things now intensely interesting to us they sometimes find it difficult to recall, because at the time of their occurrence great men and great events were so common as to pass unnoticed. "When I saw General Washington every day," says one of these whom it is sometimes my privilege to converse with, "when I sat by his side or walked with him in the street; when he dropt in unexpectedly to take tea with my mother, or sat laughing at Nelly Custis's wild gayety; I never thought of the time when the least personal reminiscence of him would be precious."

Still, enough is remembered to give us an intimate idea of the manners of those days, and of the appearance of the men whose reputation is now among our most precious national possessions.

Washington never appears greater than at the moment of peace, when most war-leaders are glad to sink

into repose, leaving to others the care of what they have secured. The feeling of fatherhood was never stronger in him than now, and the dignity with which he takes upon himself the care of the country, and gives it his parting advice, is unique in the history of the world. His circular letter to the Governors of the different States, on the disbanding of the army, is one of his best papers.

Affairs in the army continuing in an unsettled and uneasy state, General Washington, wearied almost to death with cares and labors, planned for himself an excursion that would at once recruit body and mind, and afford him an opportunity of observation in a direction peculiarly congenial to his habits and feelings. "Finding myself in disagreeable circumstances here," he says to the President of Congress, "and likely to be, so long as Congress are pleased to continue me in this awkward situation, anxiouly expecting the definitive treaty; without command, and with little else to do than to be teased with troublesome applications and fruitless demands, which I have neither the means nor the power of satisfying; in this distressing tedium I have resolved to wear away a little time in performing a tour to the northward, as far as Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and perhaps as far up the Mohawk River as Fort Schuyler."

It is noticeable that the companion of Washington's northern trip was Governor George Clinton, father of Governor De Witt Clinton, to whom is ascribed the

honor of having originated the idea of the Erie Canal. Without wishing in the least to detract from the merit of the latter, we cannot but suppose the suggestion to have proceeded from Washington, whose mind was ever on the alert for the discovery of the natural resources of every part of the country.

Congress, then sitting at Princeton, desired that Washington would come to them, that they might consult him "on the arrangements for peace and other public concerns."

He was rather disinclined to make the removal, urging several reasons why it would be inconvenient, and saying he had already given his views in writing. His modesty shrank from the idea of public thanks, which he knew awaited him when he should appear before Congress. It was not until after the resolve of that body had been transmitted to him (a royal invitation being equivalent to a command), that he consented to present himself. Before he could set out, however, Mrs. Washington was taken ill, and he was detained several days, for which he writes to apologize to Congress, mentioning his wife's fever, and her weak and low state as his reason.

We find from the last "Order," that he set out on the 18th of August. "The commander-in-chief, having been requested by Congress to give his attention at Princeton, proposes to set out for that place to-morrow; but he expects to have the pleasure of seeing the army again before he retires to private life. During his ab-

sence, Major-general Knox will retain the command of the troops, and all reports are to be made to him accordingly."

A house had been prepared for him at Rocky Hill, near Princeton, where he resided for some time, holding conferences with committees and members, and giving counsel on public affairs, and where he wrote that admirable farewell to his army, perhaps as full of his own peculiar spirit as any of his public papers. His thanks to officers and soldiers for their devotion during the war have no perfunctory coldness in them, but speak the full heart of a brave and noble captain, reviewing a most trying period, and recalling with warm gratitude the co-operation of those on whom he relied. Then, for their future, his cautions and persuasions, the motives he urges, and the virtues he recommends, all form a curious contrast with those of Napoleon's addresses to his troops. "Let it be known and remembered," he says, "that the reputation of the federal armies is established beyond the reach of malevolence; and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame still incite the men who composed them to honorable actions; under the persuasion that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance and enterprise were in the field." Thus consistent to the last he honored all the virtues; showing that while those of the field were not misplaced in the farm, those of the farm might well

be counted among the best friends of the field—his own life of planter and soldier forming a glorious commentary on his doctrines.

The British having at length appointed a time for evacuating the city of New York, Governor Clinton issued a proclamation, enjoining the inhabitants to yield due obedience to the laws of the State, and to be vigilant in preserving law and order. The troops having come down from West Point to Harlem, waited for the British to quit the posts in the upper part of the city, and as fast as those were relinquished, marched in and took possession quietly, and without any disturbance occurring. This being accomplished, General Washington and Governor Clinton, with their suites, multitudes of citizens, and a splendid military escort, made a formal entry in procession by the Bloomingdale road, reaching the lower part of the city while the last of the British were still embarking in their boats to cross over to Jersey. The governor gave a great public dinner on that day, the commander-in-chief and all the most distinguished men gracing the occasion by their presence. A dinner to the Chevalier de la Luzerne followed this in a few days; a very elegant entertainment of a similar character, on a still more extensive scale, above one hundred gentlemen being present. Balls and festivities were the order of the day, and even those whose losses had been most severe, could not help taking some share in the rejoicings over freedom. Many a face wore a smile, while the heart

beneath it was wrapped in mourning, the feeling of patriotism triumphing, for the moment, over all private griefs. There were others, perhaps, who could have made wry faces at the grand procession of the successful "rebels," for New York had been a nest of toryism; but these malcontents, if any such there were, were wise enough to dress their looks to the pattern of the hour, and shout and illuminate with the rest. The public feeling would ill have endured any dissentient airs at that crowning moment, when blood and tears were alike forgotten in the glorious anticipations of the future.

Washington's progress southward had been one continued scene of honors and rejoicings. The people seem to have had no fear of turning the head of their idol, but gave vent to every expression that joy, gratitude, and hope could suggest. Processions, triumphal arches, cannon, music, flowers, songs, addresses, greeted him every where. But his soul was firm, his manner serious, his heart thankful, but not elated. Arrived at Annapolis, he sent to inquire the pleasure of Congress as to the mode in which he was to resign his commission, whether personally or by letter.

The former mode being preferred, a committee of reception was appointed, and with grave and dignified forms, General Washington was introduced into the Congressional Chamber. The House being "seated and covered," so runs the order for the ceremonial, the approach of the commander-in-chief was announced by

a messenger, and the secretary proceeded to introduce him, with the gentlemen of his staff, and to provide the general with a chair, the aids remaining standing.

After some pause, during which spectators were admitted and placed, the President of Congress addressed the general:

"Sir,—The United States in Congress assembled, are prepared to receive your communication," upon which Washington arose, bowing to Congress, who returned the salutation by uncovering, and read from notes a very brief address:—

Then advancing towards the President he delivered up his commission, with a copy of the address, and returned to his seat.

When the President commenced his reply, General Washington arose, and remained standing until its conclusion, when the secretary presented him with a copy of the answer. The general bowing again, took his leave, Congress acknowledging the reverence as before.

The next morning after this affecting ceremony, Washington, the new Cincinnatus, set out for Mount Vernon, there to resume the plough and the pruning knife, far dearer to him than even the sword "crowned with victorious wreaths." We fancy him on the evening of his arrival, walking once more in that beloved portico, where, says Mr. Custis, he would often pace up and down for an hour before he retired, looking out on a still, glittering, snowy landscape, shadowed here and there with dark evergreens, through whose

branches the sighing wind made wintry music, while thoughts of the past eight weary, trying, glorious years trooped through his mind, and the image of friend after friend joined the sweet or sad procession, as life or death had been his lot. Home! Home! This was, after all, the prominent idea; Home once more! We doubt if even public affairs, and joy and triumph, did not, on that first evening, fade before that thought.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Personal habits of Washington at home—Anecdote from Watson—Washington an early riser—Care of his farm—Reading aloud in the evening—Regular at church—Abstemious in eating and drinking—His love and care of Mount Vernon, and the description he gave of the estate—Attending to other people's affairs—Number of letters he wrote while at home.

LIFE at Mount Vernon was always essentially the same; the position and circumstances of the place, and the habits of the country giving it character, as well when its owner was at the summit of fame as when he first set up housekeeping there, a gay young Virginian bachelor in 1757, exercising his taste in furniture and arrangements, and writing to his London correspondent —"You will perhaps think me a crazy fellow, to be ordering and counter-ordering, almost in a breath."

We have seen the careful attention given to his own affairs in early times; the minuteness with which he describes household articles that he wished to obtain, and calculated materials and provisions for the use of the plantation. This continued to be a trait of his through life, and should be remembered by all who admire him, as a lesson of the foolishness of fancying

one's self above small affairs. When we find ourselves capable only of large ones, it is to be ascribed to the limitation of our powers, not to their grandeur. Public service and the highest offices of friendship and affection were the business of Washington's life; no man ever was more completely and efficiently the servant of the public. Yet in all the minor matters of life

> His heart
> The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

Planting trees and shrubs at Mount Vernon was one of his favorite employments, and he did it often with his own hands. He went daily through his woods, selecting and marking young trees for transplanting to the walks about his house, and when the time suited would go and superintend the whole operation. In one of the diaries, we find him employed in the pleasant labor when a load of company arrives, and he makes a rather doleful entry that he was obliged to cover up the young trees in the earth, to keep them from drying, so as to be useless. Home was always a prominent object in his mind. To adorn his home; to fill it with whatever conduces to hospitality and the comfort and amusement of guests; to have pleasant things going on in it; to surround it with the appliances which wealth has at its command; to make it the centre of bounty to a large number of less fortunate people—to these things Washington's first instincts pointed, and from an early age—from his first ownership, indeed—

he was always taking efficient measures towards the realization of his ideal; always, we mean, when higher duties did not prevent. To have suffered eight years of exile from this home, was no small sacrifice for a man so domestic and social in his tastes.

When Mount Vernon came to Washington as an inheritance from his brother, the house was comparatively inconsiderable and the grounds in a rough state. It was even then the scene of a great deal of hearty hospitality, and took its share in the hunting-dinners of the country, and whatsoever else could mark it as the residence of one of the principal families. The Washingtons killed their own mutton and drew their own seine, long before the time of which we are speaking. They lived independently and within themselves, with grain-fields and barnyards, hives and dove-cotes, cows and horses, game and fish, all at hand, and no grass growing before the door, in the Irish sense at least, for the way thither was well trodden.*

General Washington kept up the habit of the fam-

* An interesting sketch of Washington's domestic manners is found in Watson's Memoirs:—

"I had feasted my imagination for several days in the near prospect of a visit to Mount Vernon, the seat of Washington. No pilgrim ever approached Mecca with deeper enthusiasm. I arrived there in the afternoon of January 23d, '85. I was the bearer of a letter from General Green, with another from Col. Fitzgerald, one of the former aids of Washington, and also the books from Granville Sharp. Although assured that these credentials would secure me a respectful reception, I trembled with awe as I came into the presence of this great man. I found him at table with Mrs. Washington and his private family, and was received in the native dignity and with that urbanity so peculiarly combined in the character of

ily. He was related, either by blood or marriage, to half the county, and his house was thronged, in the earlier time, with familiar guests, as it was afterwards with distinguished ones.

There were from day to day and week to week perfect avalanches of company, and we find by the diary that people made nothing of staying a week or two. The general would breakfast with his guests, and then telling them he hoped they would take good care of themselves—that there were horses for those who liked to ride, the library for the studious, etc.,—he mounted his horse for his usual morning ride of ten or twelve miles round the estate, and was not seen again until a quarter before three, when he returned and dressed for dinner.

Dinner at three, when, says Mr. Custis, "the general ate heartily, being no way particular, except as to fish, of which he was very fond."

a soldier and an eminent private gentleman. He soon put me at ease by unbending in a free and affable conversation.

"Although I had frequently seen him in the progress of the Revolution, and had corresponded with him from France in '81 and '82, this was the first occasion on which I had contemplated him in his private relations. I observed a peculiarity in his smile, which seemed to illuminate his eye; his whole countenance beamed with intelligence, while it commanded confidence and respect. The gentleman who had accompanied me from Alexandria left in the evening, and I remained alone in the enjoyment of the society of Washington, for two of the richest days of my life. To have communed with such a man in the bosom of his family, I shall always regard as one of the highest privileges, and most cherished incidents of my life. I found him kind and benignant in the domestic circle, revered and beloved by all around him, agreeably social without ostentation; delighting in anecdote and adventures, without assumption; his

Dessert he took but sparingly, but the Marquis de Chastellux, who visited him in camp, says that he would eat nuts after dinner for two hours, while conversing. Mr. Irving says that sometimes he would dine on baked apples, or berries with cream or milk. He preserved, to the last, the plain and simple tastes he brought from his mother's frugal household, and belonged decidedly to that class of sturdy people who eat to live, not to the other—those who live to eat.

He liked to have company at dinner, for conversation was his chief indoor amusement; but he never, even in his youth, relished what is called conviviality. He drank home-brewed with his dinner, and after it, three or four glasses of good old wine, which he considered, as did every gentleman in his days, as necessary as meat. After the cloth was removed he drank

domestic arrangements harmonious and systematic. His servants seemed to watch his eye and to anticipate his every wish; hence a look was equivalent to a command. His servant Billy, the faithful companion of his military career, was always at his side. Smiling content animated every countenance in his presence.

"The first evening I spent under the wing of his hospitality, we sat a full hour at table by ourselves, without the least interruption, after the family had retired. I was extremely oppressed by a severe cold and excessive coughing, contracted by the exposure of a harsh winter journey. He pressed me to use some remedies, but I declined doing so. As usual after retiring, my coughing increased. When some time had elapsed, the door of my room was gently opened, and on drawing my bed-curtains, to my utter astonishment, I beheld Washington himself, standing at my bedside, with a bowl of hot tea in his hand. I was mortified and distressed beyond expression. This little incident, occurring in common life with an ordinary man, would not have been noticed; but as a trait of the benevolence and private virtue of Washington, deserves to be recorded."

to those present, and gave his only toast, "All our friends."

Mr. Custis mentions one of the general's neighbors, who had a single toast;—it was, "God bless General Washington!"

In the afternoon the general went to his library, when he was understood to be occupied with business papers or in reading. In the evening he joined the family circle, took his cup of tea with the rest, and when there was no company to prevent, read aloud the news of the day, or passages from any book which happened to engage him for the time, Mrs. Washington, at her ceaseless knitting, sitting very quietly in a corner of the sofa.

On Sundays he attended church in the morning, and in the evening read aloud some sermon or other religious book. He read with care and distinctness, though with a voice which was somewhat broken by some pulmonary attacks in his youth.

Frequently when sitting silent in the family, he would be wholly absorbed in thought and seem unconscious of all around him. At such times it was not unusual for him to raise his hand to his head and move his lips, as if debating or giving orders. His habit of attending to public business was not easily overcome, and his mind was one of ceaseless activity.

Like many other great men, Washington was a very early riser. He kept as good hours when he was President, as he had kept at his mother's, at Pope's Creek.

He generally made a very early visit to the stables, but the precious morning hours, while the head of the temperate man is at its clearest, were always devoted by him to important business. His toilet was soon finished, although he was exceedingly neat in his habits. His servant laid his things ready for him and dressed his hair, but the general always shaved himself, and took care to do it in the smallest possible time. This accomplished, he employed himself in the library till breakfast. His breakfast was very simple; some little corn cakes, with butter and honey, and two or three cups of tea. The "Spartan frugality" with which he represents himself to have received the French officers when they visited him at West Point, was in accordance with his own private tastes and habits; and the times of scarcity and distress for provisions, probably cost him very little personal sacrifice; while the well known moderation of his table helped to keep up the courage and devotion of his soldiers, who felt that their beloved commander shared their privations, instead of revelling in luxury while they were starving. We can hardly appreciate the advantage of simple and uncostly habits of living, but the history of Washington may help us to do so.

Washington was so much attached to the place, took so much interest in beautifying it, and spent such unwearied energy in the cultivation of its fields, that I do not know how to describe the owner at home without saying something of the beloved homestead.

It is a great farm, of diverse surface, lying high above the level of the Potomac, whose broad bosom reflects the outskirts of its abundant foliage. Woodlands abound in it, and evergreens and wild vines make it shady and retired in aspect. The birds whose "sweet warblings" Washington spoke of in terms more poetical than he was accustomed to use, still make vocal the "alleys green" in which it was his delight to wander; alleys which the mildness of the climate allows to be always green, though not always equally so. A more purely rural spot cannot be found than the favored home of the greatest of men, the place in which he received visits from innumerable admirers, and where he delighted to entertain the few personal friends whom he loved to see always about him. Here is his own description of it, in a letter to his agricultural friend, Arthur Young, dated Dec. 12th, '93:—

"No estate in the United States is more pleasantly situated, than this. It lies in a high, dry and healthy country, 300 miles, by water, from the sea, and on one of the finest rivers in the world. Its margin is washed by more than ten miles of tide water. It is situated in a latitude between the extremes of heat and cold, and is the same distance by land and water, with good roads and the best navigation, from the Federal City, Alexandria and Georgetown; distant from the first twelve, from the second nine, and the last sixteen miles.

"The river which encompasses the land the distance above mentioned, is well supplied with different kinds

of fish at all seasons of the year; and in the spring with the greatest profusion of shad, herring, bass, carp, tench, sturgeon, &c. Several valuable fisheries appertain to the estate; the whole shore, in short, is one entire fishery."

Mount Vernon has not now in the least the air of a show place, hardly even of a gentleman's villa, though in Washington's time it doubtless wore more nearly that appearance. Certain it is he spent a great deal of time and thought in planting choice and exotic shrubs about his house, smoothing and decorating his grass-plots, and cutting vistas through his woods, that the beauties of the prospect,—especially those of the beloved river,—might be enjoyed from every window of the mansion, as well as from its cupola. His private memoranda abound with the particulars of his plans, and the anxiety with which he pursued them under various difficulties; especially those of slave-labor and overseer's management.

The land had several distinct settlements or points of interest upon it, to each of which the general at all times gave its full measure of care and attention. These were "The Mill-Farm," "Muddy Hole," and "Dogue Run," not very sentimental names, truly, but such as he found there and such as were understood by the negroes. Every day the careful master made the tour of these farms, and recorded whatever was of interest respecting them. His visits were sometimes made with the earliest light, and he says himself that

if he found any of the hands not yet at work, he generally sent them a message of condolence on the ill health which he presumed to be the cause of late rising. He examined the work of the day before, inquired into the condition of the horses and mules, and gave orders about the care of them. As to the farming implements, we should think from his journals that he knew the value and state of every plough and hoe on the place. It is plainly to be seen, in all these records, how much the miserable slackness of slave labor vexed his exact soul; and we cannot but conjecture that he must have been a terrible thorn in the sides of the dilatory, inefficient and irregular people he had to deal with.

A few words more upon Mount Vernon itself. The house is ample in size, much increased by General Washington after he inherited it, for Lawrence Washington, being an unconspicuous and rather retiring private man, did not need or wish so large a dwelling as that which Washington's position required and his fortune justified. The mansion was originally an ordinary square house, such as may be found any where on Southern plantations; but General Washington added largely to it, and especially altered its appearance by carrying out from the wings double colonnades, which united the large house to several smaller ones back of it. These rows of pillars helped to form the whole into a vast semicircle, enclosing a beautiful lawn, and when viewed from the grove back of it, the building with its

appendages is imposing and elegant. On the north is a large room, called the library, in which Washington spent a good deal of time; always one retired hour in the morning, the family say; and there can be no doubt, from the recollections preserved by many of them, that this was the scene of his private devotions. In the library is the chimney-piece of Italian marble, presented by Mr. Vaughan.

The letters of this short period of retirement are very numerous, so much so that we cannot but wonder how one hand could accomplish them all; but we find by an expression in one of them, that Washington had for the time no secretary. The imputation sometimes cast upon the vast body of his letters, that they were in fact the work of his secretaries, is thus entirely set aside by internal evidence; for nothing can be more obvious that though different hands were of course employed, yet the same mind runs through the whole. Directness of expression, simplicity, prudent counsel, patience, moderation, justice, minute attention to accessory circumstances, occasional bursts of warmth, and, with these, a disposition to metaphorical language, mark the correspondence throughout, and no one thinks of a difference of style, or any other difference of substance than that which must necessarily result from a freedom from the affairs and responsibilities of office, after Washington's establishment at Mount Vernon.

We need hardly say that crowds of company followed him to his home, for it may easily be imagined

with what interest and curiosity he was regarded, not only by his own countrymen, but by intelligent foreigners, many of whom were attracted to this country by the wonderful success of our struggle with Great Britain. It was in view of this that the Executive Council of Pennsylvania conceived the generous idea of making an express provision for the expense that must arise from the reception of so much company in a lonely house, so far from places of public entertainment that no visitor could be allowed to depart unrefreshed, and few without an invitation for the night or for several days.

The Council intimated their wishes to their delegates to Congress in very handsome terms, and the gentlemen to whom was committed the management of this delicate affair, wisely submitted it to the person most concerned, before acting upon it in Congress. Washington, true to his constant resolution of never receiving, in any shape, pecuniary compensation for his services, declined the intended favor, saying in his letter to the President of Congress, that he should always be happy to show every suitable attention to those who called upon him. Mr. Sparks says, "His personal civilities were so rendered as to strengthen the affections of his friends, and win the esteem of those who had known him only by his fame."

In reading the voluminous correspondence of Washington, we cannot but be struck with the frequency with which he is called upon to attend to other people's

business. The sister of his old enemy, General Charles Lee, writes to him from England, to procure her a copy of her brother's will. His reply, forwarding the paper, is friendly as well as polite.

Dr. Mesmer writes to General Washington about his new science, and receives a very civil letter in reply; the Empress of Russia requests him to procure for her some Indian vocabularies, for a Universal Dictionary, which is making under her auspices, and he engages in the business at once; the Countess of Huntington, who, as a daughter of Washington, Earl Ferrers, claimed kin with General Washington, addresses him to obtain his countenance and aid in a benevolent plan of hers for the Christianization of the Indians, and draws him into a long correspondence; Colonel Carter wants a wolf-hound from Europe, and General Washington is requested to write for it. Mr. Houdon wishes to make his bust, and gets several letters, and stays a fortnight at Mount Vernon; Mr. Nicholas Pike desires to dedicate an Arithmetic to the father of his country, who declines, but in a long and very civil letter; Mr. William Gordon wants information and "profiles"—(no daguerreotypes in those days!) for a history of the Revolution, and gets a long and interesting letter; Mademoiselle de Lafayette, at the mature age of eight, sends the general an epistle and receives one in return.

Mr. Dalby, of Alexandria, goes to Philadelphia in pursuit of a runaway slave, and has a long letter from General Washington to Robert Morris, by way of in-

troduction. The King of Spain sends General Washington a couple of "magnificent"—jackasses, for which the general gravely returns thanks in a letter to the Count Florida Blanca; Mr. Pine applies, through Francis Hopkinson, for leave to paint the general, and here is his answer:

"*In for a penny, in for a pound*, is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painter's pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck; and sit, 'like Patience on a monument,' whilst they are delineating the lines on my face. It is a proof, among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was as impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a colt is under the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray horse moves more readily to his thill than I to the painter's chair."

The Marquis de Chastellux, one of the French officers who had aided in the war, marries a wife, and writes to inform General Washington of his change of condition. In reply we have an unwonted burst of gayety:

"MOUNT VERNON, 25*th April*, 1788.

"TO THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX:

"MY DEAR MARQUIS,—In reading your very friendly and acceptable letter, which came to hand by the last mail, I was, as you may well suppose, not less delighted than surprised to meet the plain American words, 'my

wife.' A wife! Well, my dear marquis, I can hardly refrain from smiling to find you are caught at last. I saw, by the eulogium you often made on the happiness of domestic life in America, that you had swallowed the bait, and that you would as surely be taken, one day or another, as that you were a philosopher and a soldier. So your day has at length come. I am glad of it, with all my heart and soul. It is quite good enough for you. Now you are well served for coming to fight in favor of the American rebels, all the way across the Atlantic Ocean, by catching that terrible contagion, domestic felicity, which, like the small-pox or the plague, a man can have only once in his life, because it generally lasts him (at least with us in America; I know not how you manage these matters in France) for his whole lifetime. And yet, after all, the worst wish I can find in my heart to make against Madame de Chastellux and yourself, is, that you may neither of you get the better of this same domestic felicity, during the entire course of your mortal existence."

Mr. Lund Washington, in 1783, has to advise the widow of Mr. John Parke Custis with respect to a second marriage, and writes to the general, who answers him thus:

"Rocky Hill, 20*th September*, 1783.

"To Lund Washington:

"Dear Lund,—Mrs. Custis has never suggested, in

any of her letters to Mrs. Washington (unless ardent wishes for her return that she might then disclose it to her, can be so construed), the most distant attachment to D. S.; but, if thus should be the case, and she wants advice upon it, a father and mother, who are at hand, and competent to give it, are at the same time the most proper to be consulted on so interesting an event. For my own part, I never did, nor do I believe I ever shall, give advice to a woman who is setting out on a matrimonial voyage; first, because I never could advise one to marry without her own consent; and, secondly, because I know it is to no purpose to advise her to refrain when she has obtained it. A woman very rarely asks an opinion or requires advice on such an occasion, till her resolution is formed; and then it is with the hope and expectation of obtaining a sanction, not that she means to be governed by your disapprobation, that she applies. In a word, the plain English of the application may be summed up in these words: 'I wish you to think as I do; but, if unhappily you differ from me in opinion, my heart, I must confess, is fixed, and I have gone too far *now* to retract.'

"If Mrs. Custis should ever suggest any thing of this kind to me, I will give her my opinion of the *measure*, not of the *man*, with candor, and to the following effect. 'I never expected you would spend the rest of your days in *widowhood;* but in a matter so important, and so interesting to yourself, children and connections, I wish you would make a prudent choice. To do

which, many considerations are necessary; such as the family and connections of the man, his fortune (which is not the *most* essential in my eye), the line of conduct he has observed, and the disposition and frame of his mind. You should consider what prospect there is of his proving kind and affectionate to you; just, generous, and attentive to your children; and how far his connections will be agreeable to you; for when they are once formed, agreeable or not, the die being cast, your fate is fixed.' Thus far, and no farther, I shall go in my opinions. I am, dear Lund, &c."

Without giving more space to the details of the thousand-and-one calls upon the time and attention of Washington in his retirement, we have said enough to give an idea of how little his hours were at his own disposal, and how great must have been the industry which enabled him to accomplish so much business both small and great.

A journey of five weeks through the wilderness, six hundred and eighty miles on horseback, for the purpose of ascertaining the capabilities of his own lands and the possibility of a water communication between the East and West, was one of the diversities of the period of retirement; an expedition which, while it served the purposes of health and respite from ceaseless interruption, proved of very great importance in a patriotic point of view. This had been long in his mind, and he communicated the results of his observations to the governor

of Virginia in a long and able letter, which is considered one of his most sagacious and valuable productions. This, says Mr. Sparks, was the first suggestion of the great system of internal improvements, which has since been pursued in the United States.

The Legislature of Virginia were so impressed with the value of General Washington's suggestions on this subject, that they voted him one hundred and fifty shares in the companies for the navigation of the rivers Potomac and James. But even this free gift, worth some forty thousand dollars, was declined, though with every expression of gratitude and respect.

Washington added, however, that if the Assembly saw fit to appropriate the gift to some object of public usefulness, he would be happy to propose one. This being assented to, he divided the amount, giving one hundred shares to an institution in Rockbridge County, since called Washington College, and fifty shares to the District of Columbia, for the establishment of a National University, an object which he always had much at heart. Education was his darling object as a citizen. He often lamented his own want of it, and was never so well satisfied as when he was providing it for others. In several instances he is known to have offered to pay for the college education of young men. He accepted the Chancellorship of William and Mary College, because he loved to lend his name and influence to institutions of sound learning, and he left a thousand pounds to Alexandria as a contribution to the support of a free

or ragged school. It is well known that no child ever came in any sense under his care, for whom he did not take the greatest pains in providing every possible means of improvement, and give his attention and advice even as to the minutiæ of character and behavior. It would rejoice his heart to see the facilities for education, which, in the United States, are now offered to the humblest citizen. He would see in them a preparation for peace and virtue—the best possible safeguard against a misunderstanding or misapplication of the great boon of national Liberty.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

State of the Union after the War—Convention for forming the Constitution—Washington's progress to New York—His inauguration as first President of the United States—Labors and excitement afterwards—Severe illness—Death of his mother—Her character—How much was her son indebted to her?—Character of his wife.

Did Washington, when he found himself once more established in this beloved home, surrounded by the objects, the employments, the friends he so much loved and had so long coveted—did he give himself up to quiet enjoyment, and, with a feeling that he had made all the sacrifices to public duty that could reasonably be asked of any man, forget the trembling interests of his newly-delivered country, or leave the care of them to younger and more ambitious patriots?

Very far from this is the conclusion to which we arrive by a study of his papers of the period. Hardly a day passed over his head at Mount Vernon, that did not bring letter or visitor, whose topic was the disturbed and unhappy state of public affairs at this critical juncture; and at no moment was Washington so much occupied with private and personal business or

pleasure, that he failed to give the most earnest attention to every sign of the times.

He very soon became aware that what was called the Union was a mere collection of fragments, held together by the necessity of the day, and that the instant the war ceased, these must fall asunder at once, leaving incongruity to become enmity at the slightest provocation. Disunion and jealousy had already shown themselves, and to a despondent eye, the liberty so dearly purchased was about to become useless, through the pride, selfishness, and short-sighted folly of those who wished to grasp it, forgetful of the solemn conditions on which alone it can be enjoyed.

These sad truths came home to the Father of his Country in various forms. The first and best men confided their fears to him, entreated his advice, and looked to his wisdom and his influence as their best earthly hope. He himself was at times a good deal depressed. "Illiberality," he says, "jealousy, and local policy mix too much in all our public councils for the good government of the Union."

At length we find him, after many efforts to be excused, appointed one of the delegates to a Convention held in Philadelphia for revising the Constitution.

One part of his preparation for the important duty of revising the government of the newly-delivered country, and establishing that difficult form of national life—A REPUBLIC, or self-governing body, was a careful review of all former confederated governments, in-

cluding the Lycian, Amphictyonic, Achæan, Helvetic, Belgic, and Germanic. A paper in his own handwriting, in which all the particulars relating to the structure of these republics are noted, bears witness to the conscientious industry with which he applied all his powers to the study of any subject on which he was called to act.

He was chosen President, and the result of the Convention was that venerated instrument, known as the Constitution of the United States.

For the assembled wisdom and goodness of the nation to devise the Constitution, with all the foresight and impartiality that could be expected of imperfect humanity, was one thing; to secure the adoption of it by thirteen jealous States was quite another. Washington says of it that he was "not such an enthusiastic, partial or undiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real, though not radical defects," and others of the best men thought with him, but as each objector when pressed for his sentiments, would pick out a different point for censure, the conclusion was fairly drawn, that, after all, the Constitution was as nearly perfect as could be rationally expected; and the votes of nine States, the number necessary for its legal ratification, were obtained in rather less than a year.

This was no sooner accomplished than the necessity for electing a President made a new ferment. Washington's was the name on every lip. The man

who had led the nation safely through the tremendous struggle for liberty, and whose wisdom had again been made manifest in the formation of the Constitution, was the one to whom the people and the world naturally looked as the best fitted to reconcile jarring elements, and teach his countrymen what this freedom, which had cost them so dear, really meant and required.

The object of public attention could not long remain ignorant that all eyes were fixed on him. With what dread reluctance he admitted the thought of being President, may easily be gathered from his letters to his friends, sustained as they are by the united testimony of all who knew him. It was no mock modesty or pretended unwillingness that made his inclinations point towards Mount Vernon. "At my age," he says, "and in my circumstances, what object or personal emolument had I to seek after in this life? The great Searcher of human hearts is my witness, that I have no wish which aspires beyond the humble and happy lot of living and dying a private citizen on my own farm."

He speaks in another place of "the dreaded dilemma of being forced to accept or refuse;" says he has always felt a sort of gloom on his mind when he has thought of it, and a diffidence and reluctance that he never experienced before.

It was known that Washington was the choice of the nation, nearly a month before an official notifica-

tion of the fact was sent to Mount Vernon, the action of Congress having been delayed by various circumstances. Washington says—"The delay may be compared to a reprieve." His diary thus records his departure from home :—

"*April* 16*th*, 1789.

"About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life and to domestic felicity; and, with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York, with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

His progress to New York was one continued triumph. The people poured forth to greet him and to heap blessings upon him. Trenton, in particular, once, under an inclement sky and midnight darkness, the scene of a splendid achievement, met him with honors that touched his heart and filled his eyes with tears of gratified feeling. A beautiful arch of evergreens crowned the bridge over which the brave legions of seventy-seven had passed in their snowy march, and emblems of love and honor shone where heavy banners and almost as heavy hearts once passed. As the general with his cortège passed under these, a crowd of little girls, with wreaths on their heads, and carrying baskets from which they scattered flowers in the path

of the hero, sang a song of welcome, while their mothers, who stood in palpitating silence on either side, accompanied the music with mingled tears and smiles.

The scene quite overcame Washington. He often spoke of it afterwards, and declared that it completely unmanned him.

A splendid deputation from New York met the presidential cavalcade at Elizabethtown, and a grand flotilla accompanied him to New York.

In Washington's diary we find this sober thought of all the splendor:—

"The display of boats which attended and joined on this occasion, some with vocal and others with instrumental music on board; the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people which rent the sky as I passed along the wharves, filled my mind (contemplating the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) with sensations as painful as they were pleasing."

Thursday, April 13th, was the day of the inauguration. It was opened with divine service in the different churches, so solemn an event as the commencement of our government seeming to the people worthy of as solemn ceremonies. After this the President moved in procession to Federal Hall, in Wall street, where the Custom House now stands, and was received at the door and conducted to the chair by the Vice President, John Adams. After he had been informed that both

Houses of Congress were ready to proceed with the ceremonies of the day, Washington arose and moved towards the balcony, before which immense crowds of people were assembled, and there, in the sight of the multitude, took the oath of office, which was administered by the Chancellor, Brockholst Livingston, the secretary of the Senate bearing the Bible on a crimson cushion.

Washington was dressed in a full suit of dark brown cloth, with white silk stockings, all of American manufacture; silver buckles in his shoes, and his hair tied and powdered. In kissing the book as he took the oath, he was observed to say audibly, "I swear!" adding, with closed eyes, as if to collect all his being into the momentous act—"So help me God!" Then the Chancellor said, "It is done!" and turning to the multitude, waved his hand, and with a loud voice exclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!"

The acclamations of the crowd below re-echoed the announcement, and the roar of artillery gave notice to the country round that the birth of a new nation was accomplished.

Returned to the Senate chamber, the President delivered his Inaugural Address, a paper, like all his other public ones, full of wisdom, moderation, good taste, and a deep sense of responsibility.

In the evening the city was splendidly illuminated, and the President, with two attendants, went in a car-

riage to different points to enjoy the scene, but was obliged to return home on foot, the crowd being too dense to admit the passage of a carriage.

Great throngs of company soon beset the new officials, and the President in particular was allowed no rest, until he established certain hours and forms for the reception of visitors. Simple as was this ceremonial, there were those who condemned it as unrepublican, though we are not informed that they proposed any other method by which the President could better reconcile his duties one with the other.

Every Friday afternoon Mrs. Washington received company, and once a week there was a large dinner party, to which heads of departments, strangers of distinction, and marked citizens were invited in turn.

A grand ball was given in New York on the occasion of the Inauguration, although not till a week or ten days had elapsed, to give time for the despatch of a great mass of public business. The President attended, although Mrs. Washington had not yet reached the seat of government, and he is recorded to have danced on the occasion "two cotillions and a minuet."*

* The question of ceremony was still agitated with a vehemence that would better have become the court of Pekin; and even Mr. Jefferson, who, with all his acuteness, sometimes took up stories on hearsay, gives a ludicrous account of this ball, but which is proved to be totally erroneous, by the fact that neither Mrs. Washington nor Mrs. Knox was present at it. The authority quoted is "Mr. Brown," but not the celebrated "Brown" of our day, who would doubtless have been better informed in such a case. As a picture of the times, we should like to quote the story, but must refer our readers to the "Republican Court," page 156.

Mrs. Washington set out from Mount Vernon on the 19th of May, in her own carriage, with her grandchildren, Miss and Master Custis. Wherever she stopped the people turned out to do her honor, and fireworks and serenading enlivened every evening. Two troops of dragoons and a large train of the first citizens rode out from Philadelphia, to meet her at a place ten miles off; and as her carriage approached, the military formed, and received her with the honors due to the commander-in-chief.

As she went on towards New York, these demonstrations of respect still greeted her at every halt, and at Elizabethtown her husband, accompanied by many distinguished persons, met her with a splendid barge, manned by thirteen pilots in white uniforms, and so took her across the glad waters to her home in the city.

According to the account of Mr. Wingate, the President gave a private dinner on Mrs. Washington's arrival, rather plainer in style than we should think even decent in these extravagant days. The particulars mentioned are few, but the idea conveyed is that of excessive frugality:—"It was the least showy," we are told, "of any that the writer ever saw at the President's table." Yet the company was large and very distinguished.

As to Washington's resolute frugality, we have an anecdote, mentioned in the volume just quoted, and elsewhere. His steward, Sam Fraunces, an old caterer, and who had been cautioned again and again as to the

particularity with which the President would examine his accounts, had provided for breakfast a very fine shad, the first of the season. "The next morning it was duly served, in the best style, for breakfast; on sitting down to which, Washington observed the fragrant delicacy, and asked what it was. The steward replied that it was a fine shad. 'It is very early in the season for shad—how much did you pay for it?' 'Two dollars.' 'Two dollars! I cannot encourage such extravagance at my table. Take it away—I will not touch it.' The shad was accordingly removed, and Fraunces, who had no such scruples, made a hearty meal upon it in his own room."

It is said that Mrs. Washington was a little aristocratic in her feelings, at least so far as not to relish the democratic style brought in by the French Revolution. This we may easily believe; for she came of a prosperous and wealthy old family, and was herself a belle and an heiress, accustomed to admiration and deference from her earliest youth. If her quiet spirit could rise and look in upon one of those things called presidential levées in our day!

Yet she was a most excellent wife and mistress of the family, devoted to duty and her husband, and setting an example of economy and industry very rare in her station. Content with the greatness described by the wise king, she looked well to her maidens, and so managed the affairs of a large establishment, that "the heart of her husband could safely trust in her, so that

he had no need of spoil." Who knows how much the good management and moderation of his household had to do with Washington's superiority to the temptations of gain? Women should see to it that they so regulate their habits of expense, that their husbands shall have "no need of spoil." The extravagant tastes of Mrs. Arnold, amiable woman though she was, are known to have heightened her husband's rapacity, and thus added to the incentives which resulted in treason and ruin. Mrs. Washington, when she was in the highest position in the nation, wore gowns spun under her own roof; and she always took care, in her conversation with the ladies about her, to exalt domestic employments, and to represent them as belonging to the duty of woman in any station. She was reputed to be the writer of a patriotic paper, published in 1780, called the "Sentiments of an American Woman;" but this has not been ascertained. The energy and consistency of her patriotic feeling was, however, perfectly understood, and she is said to have borne her part in the conversation, in distinguished company, with invariable dignity and sweetness.

Soon after his inauguration, Washington, overcome by excessive labors and continual excitement, was seized with a violent illness which confined him for six weeks.

"During this period Dr. Bard never quitted him. On one occasion, being left alone with him, General Washington, looking steadfastly in his face, desired his

candid opinion as to the probable termination of his disease, adding, with that placid firmness which marked his address, 'Do not flatter me with vain hopes; I am not afraid to die, and therefore can bear the worst.' Dr. Bard's answer, though it expressed hope, acknowledged his apprehensions. The President replied, 'Whether to-night or twenty years hence makes no difference; I know that I am in the hands of a good Providence."

Before the President had entirely recovered, he received intelligence of the illness and death of his aged mother, of whom he had taken a tender leave when he set out to assume the presidency, feeling that he should probably never see her more.

It is said that at this last parting, Washington, embracing his mother, bowed his head upon her shoulder and wept, murmuring at the same time something of a hope that they should meet again. "No, George," she replied, "this is our last parting; my days to come are few. But go, fulfil your high duties, and may God bless and keep you."

His mother was then dying of the cancer which at last put a painful end to her life, at the age of eighty-two. Honored as she deserved to be, and showing to the last the resolution and fortitude which had distinguished her through life, she descended to the grave with dignity, and left a name far above all titles. To have been the mother of Washington was enough. The world has agreed to consider some of his noblest traits as derived

from her; and to her steadiness of character, her sound, common-sense views, her high and stern morality, and her deep sense of religious responsibility, are undoubtedly due a large part of the illustrious virtues which made her son what he was. She hated glare and hollowness, and so, from first to last, did he. His love of fame had no reference to such reputation as is fortuitous and unearned. He would at any time take more pains to get rid of a credit which did not belong to him, than to vindicate his title to any honor that was his due. Truth, solidity, transparency, modesty; a pride not inconsistent with deep humility, and a love of reputation which never glanced toward any sacrifice of principle, —these were the traits of the son, "known and read of all men;" and, accepting, in some measure, a traditionary estimate of the mother, these are they which all the world agrees to give her credit for. Woman cannot ask a more generous construction of facts, or a nobler encouragement to virtue. If we are to be judged by the virtues of our sons, what preparation, attention, or sacrifice can be too much for a mother? Too often their weakness, their vice, the poverty or shame of their career, is laid at our door; but here is at least one instance, that when their virtues are eminent, mankind is just and candid enough to remember that in this direction too, the mother's forming power should be recognized.

As soon as the President's health was restored, after the severe attack we have mentioned, he made

a long-intended tour through the Eastern States, travelling in his own chariot, attended on horseback by his secretaries. Showing what very trifles may disturb the equanimity of great people, there was a misunderstanding on some point of etiquette, as the President approached Boston, which seems to have thrown both him and the excellent Governor of Massachusetts, John Hancock,—"the most generous and disinterested of men,"—off their usual balance a little, and occasioned some sharp passages between them. The Governor had written, inviting the President to make his house his home while in Boston, which invitation the President courteously declined, urging his invariable rule never to burden any private family in that way. The Governor then changed the invitation to one for a family dinner, which the President accepted.

But the public reception of the President was to intervene. For this Governor Hancock had made what he considered very satisfactory arrangements, but unhappily the Selectmen of the town of Boston had made other, and quite different ones. Both desired to pay the highest honors to the illustrious guest, but each chose to manage the matter in their own way.

When the President was approaching the town, the dispute was at its height. Both authorities held back, while messengers were posting between them. The day was cold and disagreeable; the President sat shivering on his horse, on Boston Neck, waiting to enter the town in due form. He inquired the cause of the delay, and

expressed impatience when he heard what it was. Turning to his secretary, he asked whether there was no other avenue to the town; and was in the act of turning his horse's head, when he was informed that the difficulty was accommodated. All this because the Governor claimed the honor of receiving the President, while the Selectmen considered it their privilege.

We have noticed this little flurry, partly because it is amusing, and partly to show how sensitive the new governments were on the score of etiquette, while all was yet in a forming state, and each trivial affair assumed an importance not its own, but only as a seed of the future. Matters of etiquette always have a certain significance, and are often therefore more important than they seem. It was on this ground that Washington was, as a public man, rather punctilious; in his private character ceremony was burdensome to him; he loved simplicity and directness, and that *bonhommie* which takes it for granted that every body behaves as well as he knows how; but where the public interest or official dignity was in question, he quite enraged forward or ill-bred people, sometimes, by the pertinacity with which he adhered to established forms. When at home at Mount Vernon, he was equally resolute against ceremonious restraints.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Presidential tour—A careless groom—Observations on the country—Internal improvements—Washington's desire to resign—The remonstrances of his friends—His re-election—Difficulties with France—Jay's Treaty—Citizen Genet—Retirement of Washington.

In 1791 the President made a tour through the Southern States, travelling in twelve weeks about nineteen hundred miles, with the same horses. This shows the care and judgment which he always exercised where his horses were concerned; for nothing less than his knowledge of the animal and his consideration for its well-being, could have enabled him to accomplish such a journey. He always looked after his horses himself, daily ascertained their condition, and gave particular directions to the stablemen for their management.

It is traditionally said that he once, with a good deal of unction, tried the stirrup-leather on the shoulders of a groom who had left a favorite horse uncared for, after Washington had ridden him pretty hard on the preceding evening. The servant thought he would be up so early that his master would never find out the omission; but Washington was too prompt for him, and

while Cupid, or perhaps Apollo, was dreaming of last night's frolic, the sound of the stable-bell just at dawn announced that the unhappy steed had mutely told his own story. The result would certainly have afforded amusement to a bystander, especially as the President had doubtless lost some of the strength of arm which distinguished him in early times when he flogged the poacher, or when he shook the two fighting soldiers at Cambridge.

The presidential tours which Washington thought it incumbent on him to make, for the sake of becoming personally acquainted with the state of the country and of the public mind, and of allowing the people to obtain a more immediate knowledge of their chief magistrate, were perhaps the most agreeable portions of his life during those anxious and laborious years. He was fond of travelling, and as soon as he found himself in a region new to him, his mind left the old ruts of office and routine duty, and aired and invigorated itself by wider surveys, and speculations on the possibilities offered by any and every natural advantage, whether of soil, watercourse, mine, or peat marsh. Even the Dismal Swamp was indebted to him for surveys and improvements. All his conjectures and conclusions on matters of internal improvement were carefully registered, and he thus obtained and preserved a body of information which was continually coming into use, and proving of great value to himself and the public. He possessed the wisdom which legislators so often lack—

the wisdom which prompts to home-development rather than foreign conquest; making the most of what we have, rather than seeking to acquire more for the sake of mere possession.

When the question of Washington's resignation came up—or rather when he expressed his determination to resign, for he did not wish to put it in the form of a question—all party and other differences disappeared at once, in the unanimity with which he was urged to undertake the labors and embarrassments of another presidential term. "The confidence of the whole Union," says, Jefferson, "is centred in you." Hamilton, after a labored argument, "I trust and pray God that you will determine to make a further sacrifice of your tranquillity and happiness to the public good." Gouverneur Morris,—"It will be time enough for you to have a successor when it shall please God to call you from this world."

Washington, though longing for home and rest, and so resolved upon resigning that he had already prepared a farewell address to the people, could not withstand the general opinion and desire, so urgently expressed. The unanimous vote of the electors again ushered him into the chair, and he took the oath of office for the second time, on the 4th of March, 1793.

Affairs of state were not without their peculiar trials during the second term. The political relations of our country with our late enemy England, and with our stanch ally, France, had assumed an aspect of

great complexity and difficulty—one party accusing the President of a partiality towards Great Britain, the other fancying him too much disposed to favor revolutionary France. The first-mentioned factionists insisted on his acceding to the insolent demands of Citizen Genet in behalf of the Directory; but Washington, having determined that neutrality was the proper policy for this country, withstood all possible abuse and even the terrors of a mob, which, says John Adams, gathered in the streets of Philadelphia, to the number of ten thousand, threatening to drag the President from his house and seize the government. Quietly, as was his wont, he pursued the course he had decided to be best for the country, and menaces of personal violence moved him no more than they would stir his Jove-like marble image in the Capitol grounds.

The commercial treaty with Great Britain, effected by Mr. John Jay, caused almost equal popular dissatisfaction; and when it became necessary to apply to the House of Representatives for means to carry it into effect, that body demanded the submission of papers to its inspection, as a condition of its action in the matter. This Washington resisted as unconstitutional, and endured a new shower of obloquy in consequence. Being, however, sustained by the opinion of his legal advisers, he stood firm, and in the end triumphed, as he invariably did, because he always ascertained his duties before he attempted to perform them. That he was annoyed by this incessant struggle, and wounded by

these malignant attacks, is but too obvious from his letters; and we learn, not only by his own observations, but by those of Mr. Jefferson and others, that his health was seriously broken by the unusual trials of his position.

But he endured to the end, and allowed no personal considerations to deter him from the arduous task he had undertaken. A third presidential term was proposed to him; but this he resolutely declined. As the time approached when he was to be released from the cares and anxieties of government, after he had written the inestimable Farewell Address—"the result of much experience and reflection"—as he modestly says; it is evident that his mind luxuriated in images of repose and seclusion. To a friend he writes:—"To the wearied traveller who sees a resting-place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself."

He was not, however, allowed to enjoy the absolute tranquillity he hoped for. A cloud of war soon darkened the horizon, the shadow of troublous times in distracted France. At the first threat of this new trouble, the country turned again to its old defender, and required his services as commander-in-chief of any forces that it might be found necessary to raise against French invasion. His consent was a matter of course, with a stipulation, that he was not to be called to the field except in case of actual invasion.

Washington, however, although he agreed on think-

ing warlike preparations necessary, did not believe the invasion would ever take place, and the event justified his foresight. The clouds of war passed by, and he was relieved from the new responsibility, though not until it had cost him a good deal of laborious and anxious planning of ways and means.

Once more the beloved shades were all his own, with the hope, so fondly recurred to at every opportunity, of spending "the remnant of a life worn down with cares, in contemplation of the past, and in scenes, present and to come, of rural enjoyment."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Washington's short enjoyment of repose—His illness, sufferings and death—Funeral ceremonies—Grief of the nation—Resolutions of Congress—Request for his remains—Mrs. Washington's reply—Our responsibilities as countrymen of Washington.

"MAN proposes, God disposes." The quiet enjoyment so longed for as the fitting close of a life of arduous duty; the period of peace and self-recollection, and solemn special preparation for a new condition of being, desired by the wise and good man, was destined to be short indeed. Scarcely had the prospect of war faded away, and the country returned to its usual occupations and interests, and the enjoyment of the good secured to it by the toils of its brave defenders, when he who had been foremost in labors and sacrifices, wisest in council, most patient under defeat and obloquy, most moderate in victory, least elated by praise, was summoned to the Great Audit, the nature and importance of which he had so well learned when a child at his mother's knee. His time on earth was suddenly finished, and we may consider it a new mark of the heavenly favor, that he was withdrawn from a scene in which he had acted so conspicuous a part, be-

fore the failure of his powers had lessened the universal reverence he had been able to inspire. Washington was not left to outlive himself. His sun went not down in gloomy clouds, but, canopied gloriously by the people's love and the whole world's reverence, shone with full splendor to the last. His rural occupations were pursued with unabated interest and vigor; he drew up plans for the management of his estate extending to some four years ahead, saying that even a plan not the best was better than no plan; he planted trees, for shade as well as fruit; he beautified his estate by care of the gardens and shrubbery, and he never, unless in case of very bad weather, omitted his daily ride round the estate, for the minute inspection of the farm business and the care of the negroes.

But in December, 1799, there was a cold and rather threatening morning, whose bleak winds should have warned a man of sixty-eight that the fireside was the best place for him. Washington, however, disregarding his wife's prudent advice, rode out as usual, having something particular to attend to. It began to rain and snow soon after he departed. About dinner time he returned, cold and weary, and somewhat wet, the rain having penetrated to his neck, while snow hung on his white locks. Mrs. Washington was concerned to see this, and begged him to make some change in his dress, but he thought it unnecessary, saying his great coat had protected him. He spent the evening as usual, reading aloud to the family, although he was

observed to be a little hoarse. The next day, which proved still more stormy, he seemed nearly as well as usual, though he complained of having taken cold, and the weather prevented his ride. He franked some letters which Mr. Lear had written, but forbore to send them to the post-office, saying the weather was too bad to send a servant out with them. At intervals when the skies were a little more favorable, he went out to attend to the planting of some trees. The evening of this day, Friday, December 13th, passed in the usual domestic way, the general very cheerful, and reading aloud a little, though with evident difficulty from increased hoarseness.

About three in the morning he awoke Mrs. Washington, saying that he had a chill and felt very unwell; but he would not allow her to get up lest she should take cold. At daylight when the servants came to make a fire, he desired that a person on the farm—the overseer, who was in the habit of performing the office for the negroes—should be sent for, to bleed him.

Bleeding used to be the remedy for all sorts of diseases, especially in the country, where the services of a physician cannot readily be obtained. This practice, very much objected to by Mrs. Washington at the time, is now universally condemned, and it was doubtless the very worst remedy that could have been tried in the case of Washington, an old man, and extremely temperate in his habits. The overseer hesitated, and opened a vein timidly; but his master insisted, saying,

though with difficulty—"Don't be afraid—the orifice is not large enough." But the disease, which was in the throat, grew worse hour by hour.

As the day went on, there were further attempts to reduce the patient, who by this time had begun to need all his remaining strength to draw his laboring breath.

"I cannot last long," he said to Mr. Lear, his secretary, who attended him like a son; "I cannot last long. I feel that I am going. I believed from the first, that the attack would prove fatal. Do you arrange and record all my military letters and papers; arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than any one else." "He then asked me," says Mr. Lear, "if I recollected any thing else that it was essential for him to do, as he had but a very short time to continue with us. I told him that I could recollect nothing, but that I hoped he was not so near his end. He observed, smiling, that he certainly was, and that, as it was the debt we must all pay, he looked to the event with perfect resignation."

He was raised on the bed, and, as well as he could find utterance, said to his physicians—"I am much obliged for all your care and attention. Do not take any more trouble about me, but let me go off quietly; I cannot last long."

To his friend Dr. Craik—"Doctor, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go." The doctor, who had been his friend from childhood, turned away, overwhelmed with grief, at his terrible sufferings and the loss that must

come. Washington, noticing that the black servant had been standing a long time, in the midst of his sufferings desired him to sit down.

At eight in the evening the physicians came into the room and tried more remedies, but in vain. After this time the patient breathed with less difficulty, but was very restless, with the restlessness of approaching dissolution; often changing his position, seeking the ease or relief which was not to come, and frequently asking the hour.

Mr. Lear says,—"I aided him all in my power, and was gratified in believing he felt it, for he would look upon me with eyes speaking gratitude, but unable to utter a word without great distress.

"About ten o'clock he made several efforts to speak to me before he could effect it. At length he said—'I am just going. Have me decently buried, and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than two days after I am dead.' I bowed assent. He looked at me again, and said—'Do you understand me?' I replied, 'Yes, sir!' He said, 'Tis well.'"

"About ten minutes before he expired, his breathing became much easier; he lay quietly. He withdrew his hand from mine and felt his own pulse. I spoke to Dr. Craik, who sat by the fire; he came to the bedside. The general's hand fell from his wrist; I took it in mine and placed it on my breast. Dr. Craik closed his eyes, and he expired without groan or struggle."

"In all his distress," says Mr. Lear, "he uttered not a sigh nor a complaint, always endeavoring, from a sense of duty, as it appeared, to take what was offered him, and to do as he was desired by the physicians. His patience, fortitude and resignation, never forsook him for a moment."

Twice during the last day's sufferings, Washington asked to be assisted in rising, was dressed and sat by the fire, as if hoping by the exertion of resolution, and what bodily strength remained, to struggle against disease. But finding no relief, he quietly submitted and laid himself down to die, with the feeling that his work was done and his discharge at hand.

All his affairs were found in perfect order, his books posted up to the preceding Tuesday, and his will carefully written out by his own hand, each page signed with his name. At the close, after mention of the executors, is the wise parting injunction to those interested, never, under any circumstances of disagreement, to have recourse to litigation, but in case of difference with respect to the will, to submit the matter to arbitrators whose sentence should be final.

On Wednesday, December 18th, 1799, the people assembled, from far and near, to pay the last honors to the greatest and best of men. The lawns and groves of Mount Vernon, so long the home of his best pleasures and object of his cares, were thronged with mourners, personal friends, military companies, and members of the Masonic Order. Cannon were brought and placed on

the heights, to announce the moment when the hero's dust was committed to its parent earth. A vessel lay off shore, firing minute guns as the procession began to form. The train moved across the lawn, soldiers leading and escorting it; the clergy in advance of the coffin, which was borne by masonic brethren and officers of the army; the war-horse, with holsters and pistols hanging at its empty saddle, led by two grooms clothed in black, followed; then members of the family and old friends; the Corporation of Alexandria and a great concourse of citizens,—and this was all.

Washington's wish and even command that his funeral might be modest—that his body might "be interred in a private manner, without parade or funeral oration,"—was thus literally fulfilled. The nation would gladly have ordered a splendid ceremonial to give all possible expression to its sense of this great loss; but the desire of Washington, so natural to one averse to all personal display, was thoroughly respected. The feet of those who bore him to the tomb trod only on the soft grass he had loved to cultivate, and the trees under which he had so long felt himself most truly at home, waved above his final resting-place far more appropriately than the most gorgeous banners would have done. The "new tomb" which he had ordered, was not yet completed, though he had said, in speaking of other buildings, "Let it be finished first, for I may want it first." The old one received his remains for the time.

Afterwards, when the present one was ready, a stone sarcophagus was prepared—and in this the original coffin was deposited, there to remain for ever.

Both Houses of Congress adjourned, on hearing of the death of Washington. The Senate addressed President Adams in a letter the eloquence of which was that of the heart. "On this occasion," says that admirable paper, "it is manly to weep. To lose such a man, at such a crisis, is no common calamity to the world. Our country mourns a father. The Almighty Disposer of human events has taken from us our greatest benefactor and ornament. It becomes us to submit with reverence to him 'who maketh darkness his pavilion.'

"With patriotic pride we review the life of our Washington, and compare him with those of other countries who have been pre-eminent in fame. Ancient and modern times are diminished before him. Greatness and guilt have too often been allied; but his fame is whiter than it is brilliant. The destroyers of nations stood abashed at the majesty of his virtues. It reproved the intemperance of their ambition, and darkened the splendor of victory. The scene is closed, and we are no longer anxious lest misfortune should sully his glory; he has travelled on to the end of his journey, and carried with him an increasing weight of honor; he has deposited it safely, where misfortune cannot tarnish it, where malice cannot blast it. Favored of Heaven, he departed without exhibiting the weakness

of humanity. Magnanimous in death, the darkness of the grave could not obscure his brightness.

"Such was the man whom we deplore. Thanks to God, his glory is consummated. Washington yet lives on earth, in his spotless example; his spirit is in Heaven.

"Let his country consecrate the memory of the heroic general, the patriotic statesman, and the virtuous sage. Let them teach their children never to forget that the fruits of his labors and his example are their inheritance."

The President replied appropriately, and both Houses of Congress united in requesting Mrs. Washington to yield the precious remains of her husband to the keeping of the nation, to be placed under a monument worthy of his fame.

Mrs. Washington replied in a letter unsurpassable for gracious feeling and unaffected dignity:

"MOUNT VERNON, *December 31st*, 1799.

"SIR,—While I feel, with keenest anguish, the late dispensation of Divine Providence, I cannot be insensible to the mournful tributes of respect and veneration, which are paid to the memory of my dear deceased husband; and, as his best services and most anxious wishes were always devoted to the welfare and happiness of his country, to know that they were

truly appreciated and gratefully remembered, affords no inconsiderable consolation.

"Taught by the great example which I have so long had before me, never to oppose my private wishes to the public will, I must consent to the request made by Congress, which you have had the goodness to transmit to me; and, in doing this, I need not—I cannot say, what a sacrifice of individual feeling I make to a sense of public duty.

"With grateful acknowledgment, and unfeigned thanks for the personal respect and evidences of condolence expressed by Congress and yourself, I remain, very respectfully,

"Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"MARTHA WASHINGTON."

The grief of the nation was profound and most warmly expressed. The whole country seemed at first as if stricken with a palsy. The suddenness of the blow—for the intelligence of illness and of death came at one and the same moment,—made the public feeling all the more striking. But as soon as this first blank horror had settled into conviction, and the idea—"Washington is no more!" had been fully received, the whole country broke forth into heartfelt lamentations, and language was exhausted in the attempt to express what was beyond expression. Funeral processions and funeral orations and eulogies were the natural offering of every village. For at least once, the unity

of feeling which Washington had so earnestly recommended was complete. No sectional jealousy checked the full and generous tide of public feeling. No "North" or "South" bounded the interest felt in the national loss. Like grateful children at the grave of a wise and beloved parent, the United States wept over the tomb of him to whom under God they owed their existence, and the flag of Liberty, every where drooping at half-mast, was a true symbol of the public feeling of the hour.

And can that solemn hour ever be forgotten? Can the feeling which thrilled our millions, under whatever skies, have passed away with the smoke of cannon and the echo of funeral eulogies that sought to give it utterance? Did all this luxuriance of grief spring from no deep root of love and reverence in the nation's heart?

Forbid it, Heaven! Forbid it, truth, wisdom, reverence, gratitude! The people who burst into spontaneous tears for the loss of Washington, had hearts to appreciate him; and to be able to appreciate him bespoke qualities in some degree akin to his own. He was no melo-dramatic hero, no meteor of war, no flimsy popular idol fit for the worship of the vulgar. His character, his career, his personal qualities, mark the race from which they sprung;—grave, high-toned, generous, resolute, devoted; and such alone must ever be his true admirers. The sincerity of the public mourning is a pledge of the future destiny of our country. The people who knew so well how to feel Washington's loss, are

not the people to forget his precepts or his character. The sentiments which actuated him, the principles by which he lived and died, are the palladium of our liberty, our prosperity, our very existence. We have a thousand times acknowledged that in abiding by them we are safe and happy, in forsaking or slighting them we renounce our strength, and give ourselves to be "the football of foreign nations." Whatever be the madness of the moment, whatever the tumult of passion or the folly of jealousy; however demagogues may play upon our weakness for their own selfish purposes, or timid hearts give way under the pressure of insolent egotism,—we are still the countrymen of Washington, and—let us fondly hope, the partakers of some portion, at least, of the magnanimous patience,—the divine self-control,—the heaven-born patriotism, that never failed him. Defeat, obloquy, provocation of every sort; ingratitude, "sharper than traitors' swords;"—the revolt of friends, the loud triumph of invidious foes; all these he bore and we can bear, for he has taught us. Keenly alive to disappointment, he had a sovereign contempt for that spirit of despair which is always a confession of impotence. Discouragements often beat him back, but it was only for one rallying moment. We, his children, have need to remember his example in this respect, and through all difficulties hold fast the glorious motto—"Never despair of the Republic!"

CHAPTER XL.

Washington's opinions on slavery—His Will and its provisions—His morals—His religion—Testimony of various persons as to his habits of devotion.

WASHINGTON was a slaveholder as he was a planter, by birth, education, and habit; and he not only saw but felt—for he was a Southern man in his private feelings, —all the difficulties which must arise from the state of things between South and North. But the first duty and necessity of all his life was the acquisition of national independence, with the subsequent establishment of a wise and efficient government for the newborn and tottering nation. All other labors and duties were secondary to this, and afforded more than abundant occupation for him and other great and good men, who won that independence and established that government for us.

To men less wise and devoted, Slavery might, indeed, have proved the apple of Atalanta, turning them aside from the great object, and so defeating all. Differences and disputes arose about it, and it required much firmness and much self-command, to hold the

great point steadily in view, and put all else resolutely in the background for the time.

That Washington, Jefferson and others of our Revolutionary forefathers, foresaw and dreaded the shape the question might ultimately assume, we gather from many expressions in their works. Mr. Jefferson in particular, expressed himself with great warmth, saying that the Almighty had no attribute which could take part with slavery, and that he trembled for his country when he reflected that God is just. Washington expresses his sentiments with no less directness: "I never mean, unless some particular circumstances should compel me to it, to possess another slave by purchase; it being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law." In another letter he says: "I hope it will not be conceived from these observations," (with respect to the recapture of a runaway slave,) "that it is my wish to hold the unhappy people who are the subject of this letter, in slavery. I can only say there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished, and that is by legislative authority, and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting."

And again, in enumerating the reasons why the price of land was higher in Pennsylvania than in Maryland and Virginia, he mentions that in Pennsylvania

"there are laws for the gradual abolition of slavery, which neither of the two States above mentioned have at present, *but which nothing is more certain than that they must have, and at a period not remote.*"

Here, then, is the true key-note of Washington's mind on this subject. He thought slavery an evil so obvious, that he rested in the belief that the good sense and principle of the whole United States (for all were slaveholders then) must in time operate for its extinction. He was not so romantic and unpractical as to think the great work could be done by a word, or that slavery could, by act of Congress, be swept away and forgotten. He knew it to be a business of great difficulty and delicacy; but he had full confidence that the time was not far distant, when the same wisdom and virtue, the same love of liberty, and the same "proper respect for the opinion of mankind," which had dictated the Declaration of Independence, would, in due season, and under an equally solemn sense of responsibility, prompt measures for the emancipation of the colored people, who had, by no choice of their own, become a part of our population. His opinion was no secret, and his views with regard to the disadvantages of slave labor are plainly to be gathered from his diaries; but he seems to have thought these things must be endured for a time, in order that the change, when it did take place, should be well-considered and wise in its provisions.

If Washington had not had the armies of the United

States to organize and lead to victory; the government to settle and to administer; and the jarring interests and ever-springing jealousies of newly emancipated millions to reconcile and charm away by his personal influence, he might perhaps have found time to think of the condition of the slaves—comparatively a mere handful at that time; but with all this business on his hands and heart, it is not to be wondered at that he left the cure of slavery to somebody else and some other day.

But he made his own sentiments, on all occasions, "clear as the sun in his meridian brightness," to use one of his most favorite similes.

Lafayette having purchased an estate in Cayenne, with the intention of freeing the slaves upon it, Washington wrote to him, "Your late purchase is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit might diffuse itself generally in the minds of the people of this country!"

An incident in his own family brought directly home to him the contradictory and rather ridiculous aspect which a slaveholding champion of liberty must present to the world.

When Mrs. Washington's favorite maid, Oney, the woman who had long been her personal attendant, done her fine sewing and prepared her caps—a nice matter of home clear-starching, quilling and frilling in those days—when this Oney ran away, and Mrs. Washington, missing her every moment and not knowing

where to look for a substitute, desired the general to advertise, offering a reward for her, he wholly declined, with a laugh (and, we doubt not, a blush too), saying it would appear finely for *him* to be advertising a run-away slave!

This woman, Oney, went to one of the Eastern States, and called on a young lady who was intimate with General Washington's family, who had seen her a thousand times at her mistress's side, and who was, of course, exceedingly surprised to see her so far from home, knowing that she was indispensable to Mrs. Washington.

"Why, Oney!" said Miss L——, "where in the world have you come from?"

"Come from New York, missis," said Oney.

"But why did you come away—how can Mrs. Washington do without you?"

Oney hung her head at this, but after a moment replied—

"Run away, missis."

"Run away! and from such an excellent place! Why, what could induce you? You had a room to yourself, and only light, nice work to do, and every indulgence—"

"Yes—I know—but I wanted to be free, missis; wanted to learn to read and write—"

This was Oney's only motive; and she remained in Maine, married and settled there, and was her own mistress ever after, though very probably with far

harder work and poorer fare than had been her lot at the President's.

This anecdote I had from the lips of the lady herself, now living in the city of New York.

It is well known that Washington never bequeathed a slave; but in the drawing up of that admirable Will, which, as he said, it occupied many of his leisure hours to digest, he carefully provided for the emancipation of all over whom he had any control.

"Upon the decease of my wife, it is my will and desire that all the slaves whom I hold *in my own right* shall receive their freedom. To emancipate them during her life would, though earnestly wished by me, be attended with such insuperable difficulties, on account of their intermixture by marriage with the dower negroes, as to excite the most painful sensations, if not disagreeable consequences to the latter, while both descriptions are in the occupancy of the same proprietor, it not being in my power, under the tenure by which the dower negroes are held, to manumit them." (So that Washington was only withheld by motives of kindness from manumitting his own slaves during his lifetime.) "And whereas, among those who will receive freedom according to this devise, there may be some who, from old age or bodily infirmities, and others who, on account of their infancy, will be unable to support themselves, it is my will and desire that all who come under the first and second description, shall be comfortably clothed and fed by my heirs while they live; and that such of the latter description as have no parents living, or, if living, unable or unwilling to provide for

them, shall be bound by the Court until they arrive at the age of twenty-five years. The negroes thus bound are," (by their masters or mistresses,) "to be taught to read and write, and to be brought up to some useful occupation. * * * * And I do hereby expressly forbid the sale or transportation out of the Commonwealth, of any slave I may die possessed of, under any pretence whatsoever. And I do, moreover, most pointedly and most solemnly enjoin it upon my executors hereafter named, or the survivors of them, to see that this clause respecting slaves, and every part thereof, be religiously fulfilled, at the epoch at which it is directed to take place, without evasion, neglect or delay, after the crops which may then be on the ground are harvested, particularly as it respects the aged and infirm; seeing that a regular and permanent fund be established for their support, as long as there are subjects requiring it; not trusting to the uncertain provision to be made by individuals."

It is plain from these extracts that Washington considered it advisable to intrust the negro with freedom, and held the opinion that emancipation might be accomplished without injury to the State. He saw the cruelty of transporting a creature so homeloving to distant parts, from a notion of public or private convenience, and expressly forbids his executors from attempting it in any case; although he had once, himself, in a sort of desperation, probably after many warnings, sent off an incorrigible fellow to the West Indies to be sold, saying that he could recommend him as the greatest rogue extant. This was done when he was much

younger and more impetuous than when he made his will, which is dated July, 1799.

On the whole, the testimony of Washington against slavery is clear and explicit enough, and no one can quote him as its apologist, although we may regret that he had not time to turn his attention more decidedly and efficiently towards its abolition.

The private morals of heroes are often such as the grateful admirers of their public services are fain to pass by in silence; but the strictness of Washington's views was amply justified by his life. Mr. Jefferson remarks of him—"His public and private ethics were the same." He was no metaphysician, and theorized but little on abstruse points. His code was short and simple, and his requisitions under it direct and authoritative. It is probable that a large part of his reflections, from an early age, touched on the distinction between right and wrong, and no human being can point out a case in which he evidently chose the wrong and did it intentionally. It is certain that the sense of having done right was his reward, his consolation, his incessant stimulus to labors and sacrifices such as few men have undertaken or endured. He often alludes to the golden rule, and acknowledges its authority. When he felt obliged to act with severity, it was always with a certain apology, which reminds the reader that these cases were exceptions, and very trying to his feelings, though he went through them resolutely. The strictness of his judgment was always modified by a sense of his own

participation in human weakness and frailty. He never assumes the air of a superior being. He never seems to set himself on any great eminence of virtue, to maintain which position might sometimes tempt him to hypocrisy; but talks and acts with a frank, manly confession of fallibility, very often expressed in words and still oftener tacitly implied. When he was angry he was very angry; but if he was ever momentarily unjust, his apology and atonement were as prompt and honest as ever came from the heart of ingenuous youth. Wounded by his friends, as it was sometimes his lot to be, his placability was touchingly beautiful, and every remnant of suspicion fled with the grasp of reconciliation. Tried severely in certain cases by the young people of his wife's family as well as those of his own, his patience was as striking as his firmness; and if he never countenanced wrong, he never, on the other hand, forgot consideration for youth. Closely allied by social and family ties with great numbers of people, most of whom wanted something of him, no instance can be found where he repelled a request, or failed to meet the demands of friendship or of need with his best endeavors at service.

There has been a strange idea, encouraged perhaps by those who would fain have it true, that Washington though a highly moral was not a religious man. How this conclusion could be honestly come to it is difficult to see. Acknowledging him to have been a truthful person, what can we think of his continual reference to

the Almighty ruler of human events, whose care and goodness he never failed to recognize both in public and private? He speaks of God as aiding all efforts on the right side, and evidently considers himself as co-operating with the Divine will in laboring for the independence of his country. The habit of his mind was to connect the affairs of this world directly and intimately with the character of the Divine government, and to see, in the course of human events, the inseparable union between goodness and happiness, as the immediate interposition of the Almighty ruler.

But, says the sectarist, "all this is only natural religion, the mere instinctive impression upon the mind of a man of sense, that there *must* be a God,—that He *must* be concerned in human affairs, and that his power of punishing infractions of the law of Conscience is sufficient reason for endeavoring to obey that law."

It would indeed be a glorious testimony to the power and efficacy of natural religion, if we could prove that such a character as that of Washington grew up and was maintained, in its marvellous consistency, by its sole aid. But fine natural powers and healthy intellectual convictions, precious though their union be, never made a George Washington.

And what shall we say of such an expression as this, in speaking of a particular course of conduct—"It would certainly be more in accordance with the precepts of *the Divine Founder of our religion.*"

The care with which Washington expressed himself

on all occasions makes an expression like this conclusive, if there were nothing else to mark him a Christian. That some people should wish to make it appear that Washington was not a religious man, is only one of many proofs that men love to detract from a reputation of transcendent merit, and to throw a cloud over glory too bright to be endured by the evil eye. There may perhaps be another explanation of these efforts—the narrowness of sectarianism, which feels bound to acknowledge no religion that does not come within its own pale. It would seem that one or the other of these motives must have operated as the inducement in raising a doubt as to the deep religiousness—the anxious sense of responsibility to God, and the habitual devotion, of Washington. It requires very little experience or observation to discover that a character like his can be built on no other foundation than that of religious principle. Only the blindness of vain and shallow infidelity fails to perceive this truth; only envy or the bitter venom of party spirit can deny its applicability in Washington's case.

But look at direct testimony on this point, and first, Washington's own.

In his circular letter to the governors of the several States, on the disbanding of the army, in 1783, he says:—

"The free cultivation of letters, the unbounded extension of commerce, the progressive refinement of manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and,

above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation, have had a meliorating influence on mankind, and increased the blessings of society.

"I now make my earnest prayer that God would have you and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate the spirit of subordination and obedience to government; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would be most graciously pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, without an humble imitation of whose example we can never hope to be a happy nation."

Mr. Sparks remarks:—"Of all men in the world, Washington was certainly the last whom any one would charge with dissimulation or indirectness; and if he was so scrupulous in avoiding even a shadow of these faults in every known act of his life, however unimportant, is it likely, is it credible, that, in a matter of the most serious importance, he should practise, through a long series of years, a deliberate deception upon his friends and the public?"

A lady who had lived twenty years in his family, Mrs. Washington's grand-daughter and the adopted

daughter of Washington, says, in a letter to Mr. Sparks, after describing his habits of morning and evening retirement—"I never *witnessed* his private devotions, I never *inquired* about them. I should have thought it the greatest heresy to doubt his firm belief in Christianity. His life, his writings, prove that he was a Christian. He was not one of those who act or pray 'that they may be seen of men.' He communed with his God in secret. My mother resided two years at Mount Vernon after her marriage. I have heard her say that General Washington always received the sacrament with my grandmother before the Revolution."

Mr. Robert Lewis, the son of General Washington's sister, was private secretary during the first presidency, lived with him on intimate terms, and had opportunities to observe his private habits. He told Mr. Sparks he had accidentally witnessed Washington's private devotions in his library both morning and evening; that on these occasions he had seen him in a kneeling posture, with a Bible open before him; and that he believed such to have been his daily practice.

A well-known incident of the Revolution may properly be cited in this connection:—

While the American army, under the command of Washington, lay encamped in the environs of Morristown, New Jersey, it occurred that the service of the communion, then observed semi-annually only, was to be administered in the Presbyterian church of that village, or rather in a grove or orchard near the church,

the building not being large enough to accommodate the numbers collected on such occasions. On a morning of the previous week the general called on the Rev. Dr. Johns, then pastor of that church, and after the usual civilities, thus accosted him :—"Doctor, I understand that the communion is to be celebrated with you next Sunday. I would learn if it accords with the canons of your church to admit communicants of another denomination?"

The doctor rejoined, "Most certainly! Ours is not the Presbyterian table, general, but the Lord's table; and hence we give the Lord's invitation to all his followers, of whatever name."

The general replied, "I am glad of it; that is as it ought to be; but as I was not quite sure of the fact, I thought I would ascertain it from yourself, as I propose to join with you on that occasion. Though I am a member of the church of England, I have no exclusive partialities."

The doctor reassured him of a cordial welcome, and the general was found seated with the communicants the next Sabbath.

The Rev. D. D. Field mentioned to me the following :—

"Mrs. Watkins, a daughter of Governor Livingston, being at my house in Stockbridge, some twenty years since, perhaps more, said that when she was a girl, General Washington lived four months at her father's during the Revolution, and that she had been by

the side of his room and heard him at prayer. My impression is that she did this repeatedly. She said that his room was in a distant part of the building, and that she had to pass through several rooms to get by the side of the general's room. She stated that her sisters used to go with her and listen, and that their father, learning what they were doing, checked them for it. Governor Livingston's house is now in a good state of repair, owned by Mr. John Kane. The house is large and has two wings. One of the wings has been raised, the other, in which Washington roomed, is in form as when he dwelt in it, though a room back of it and attached to it, where the girls listened, has been removed."

One more testimony from a living witness, Mr. Cornelius Doremus, before mentioned as a boy fond of waiting on Washington, who lived for a winter at his father's house. The old gentleman states that his bedchamber was directly over that of the commander-in-chief, and that he often distinctly heard the sound of that deep and earnest voice in private devotion.

Washington was educated as an Episcopalian, and throughout his life adhered to that denomination of Christians, satisfied with its doctrine, and if not disinclined by nature, yet too much occupied by laborious duty, to enter into any speculation upon theological points. His position from the time of his first command, made it improper for him to become the partisan or even the favorer of any particular form of Chris-

tianity; yet he was ever the friend and advocate of religion, and in no negligent or formal spirit the guardian of its interests. His total freedom from sectarian prejudices is proved by the esteem in which he was held by the ministers as well as members of the different denominations. An anecdote communicated to me by a friend touches this point:—

"General Washington, although never lavish in his professions of regard to others, probably inspired as much depth if not as much warmth of attachment, as any man who ever lived. Those who went through the Revolutionary service in associations more or less intimate with him, received an impress from his superior nature, much in proportion to their opportunities of intimate and mutual converse. Some who were but little addicted to *man-worship*, in regard to others, retained and cherished through life almost an idolatrous reverence for the name of Washington. His memory was with them the charm to conjure up, in after years, the true '*spirit* of '76.'

"The Rev. Israel Evans (an uncle of mine, by way of marriage with my father's sister) was a chaplain in the United States army through nearly the entire Revolutionary service. He was a native of New Jersey, a man of education, and capable of appreciating such a character as that of Washington. The opportunities he enjoyed for social intercourse with him, as well as with other patriots of the Revolution, were very fre-

quent and favorable, and his reverence for Washington was very great.

"It is related of Mr. Evans, that, during his last sickness, thirty years or more after the Revolution, his successor in the ministry, in the New England village where he had been settled, was called in by the family to pray with him, in the evident near approach of the dying hour. Mr. Evans had lain some considerable time in a stupor, apparently unconscious of any thing around him, and his brother clergyman was proceeding in a fervent prayer to God, that, as his servant was evidently about departing this mortal life, his spirit might be conveyed by angels to Abraham's bosom. Just at this point, the dying man for the first time and for the moment revived, so far as to utter, in an interval of his delirium, '*and Washington's, too*'—and then sunk again into apparent unconsciousness. As if it was not enough to 'have *Abraham* to his father,' and on whose bosom to repose, but he must have *Washington* too, on whom to lean. A signal manifestation of 'the ruling passion strong in death'—and of the lasting hold which that great man had on the mind and heart of one of his early and devoted friends."

But Washington's religiousness really needs no argument. The idea that such virtue could be based upon any thing but true religion is so pernicious a heresy, that it seems necessary to assure and reassure youthful readers that Washington was no instance

to be quoted in its favor. Let us now turn, in a few concluding words, to his general characteristics.

As to his personal bearing, so much has been said that we need add nothing of ours. A few lines from the letters of Fisher Ames give a fine idea of the impression left by his public appearance :—

"IMPRESSION OF WASHINGTON.—I was present in the pew with the President, and must assure you that after making all deductions for the delusions of one's fancy in regard to characters, I still think of him with more veneration than for any other person. Time has made havoc upon his face. That and many other circumstances not to be reasoned about, conspire to keep up the awe which I brought with me. He addressed the two Houses in the Senate Chamber; it was a very solemn scene, and quite of the touching kind. His aspect, grave, almost to sadness; his modesty, actually shaking. His voice deep, a little tremulous, and so low as to call for close attention, added to the series of objects presented to the mind and overwhelming it, produced emotions of the most affecting kind upon the members. It seemed to me an allegory in which virtue was personified, and addressing those whom she would make her votaries. Her power over the heart was never greater, and the illustration of her doctrine by her own example was never more perfect."

One still living, who when a child saw him often, thus remembers him :—*

"'First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen,' he was, is, and ever will remain. It is something, it is much, and it will be more, even to have seen him. Those who have, will say with one voice that they never saw any thing like him. Probably there never was a human being who ever departed from his presence without having this conviction deep upon his mind. A lady who lived opposite his lodgings all the time he resided in Philadelphia, told a friend, that General Washington never came into or out of his house that she did not remain at the window, with her eyes fixed upon him so long as he remained in sight. It was a feeling that did not wear out. See him as often as you might, it continued and even increased. There are some wonders of art, statues and paintings (they are but few), which exert a sort of infatuation upon the spectator, so that he gazes on them long, and still wants another look :—here was a wonder of nature, a work of God,—which, like Niagara, like Mont Blanc, like the rainbow, like the aurora, filled at once the mental and the physical eye, and fixed it long. As the eagle sits alone upon her eyrie, as the lion walks alone in the desert, so was Washington among men. He stands alone in history; he never will know a compeer.

* In the National Intelligencer.

As to his personal appearence.—"Gilbert Stuart, whose painting of him has immortalized not his subject but himself, and who, as one long familiar with the human countenance, is eminently fit to speak on such a subject, often said that the head and face of Washington were unlike those of any other human being that ever had come under his observation. There was a breadth about the base of the nose, and a largeness and peculiar form of the sockets of the eyes, which distinguished the face from all others. It is not generally known, but it is nevertheless true, that there was a slight defect about the eye; the eyelid did not rise entirely to its place. This communicated that peculiar downcast look which distinguished the eye of Washington, giving it an air of thought, of modest reserve, of composure almost approaching to heaviness, which one who saw him never can forget. It affected the carriage and motion of his head, occasioning him to raise it when looking up upon a stranger approaching him, more than would have been necessary or natural had the eyelid been entirely free. Yet so slight was the cause, that by most persons the effect only was noticed. Stuart failed to catch this expression, but Peale has preserved it with admirable fidelity in the portrait which hangs in the Senate chamber at Washington. When he was reading, or writing, you could not perceive it; when he was speaking, it gave modesty, gravity, and dignity to his expression; under strong excitement, as

in the heat of battle, it vanished, and his eyes shone like stars.

"Nothing can exceed the perfect truth to nature of the figure and carriage of the person, as given in Lord Lansdowne's inimitable picture, and which Heath has with equal truth and felicity transferred to copper. The moulding of his limbs, his step and bearing, were as peculiar and as readily recognized as those of Napoleon. His tread was measured and heavy, carrying in its sound dignity and command. He was born a monarch, in the highest and best sense of the term. The noble soul within looked out from a body as noble as itself; and no man who ever stood in the presence of either, thought or felt himself a great man. The awe of his presence fell alike on all men.

"My own first sight of him seems like a remote vision; it was only from a distance and in my early childhood. I had been walking up Market street (then not more than half its present length), when I saw approaching from the South a great cavalcade, attended and surrounded by floods of people, all whose looks seemed to be bent on one object. On a dark sorrel horse, which he rode with military grace and ease, was an officer of large size, wearing the triangular cocked hat which appears in all paintings of the battle scenes of the Revolution, and attended on either hand by officers of his staff. They were all so heavily loaded with dust as to be entirely of one color. Hats, coats, boots, hands, saddles, holsters, horses, seemed all

of one uniform drab, as if they had been riding for hours along a highway without stopping to remove the dust as it accumulated upon them. They told me that was General Washington; and I afterwards heard my father read from the papers of the day, an account of his having been crowned, as he passed the bridge at Gray's Ferry, with a chaplet of flowers, and greeted by a band of beautiful young ladies, chanting a song of welcome to the hero who had closed the eventful struggle for freedom by the then recent victory of Yorktown. I was too far off to recognize his features; but the mounted figure is even now distinctly before my mind's eye; and I instantly recognized it again when I saw, for the first time, Trumbull's picture of the Surrender at Yorktown, that now occupies one of the panels in the rotunda of the Capitol. The Washington there drawn, is precisely what I saw coming into the city by the road from Gray's Ferry.

"WASHINGTON AT CHURCH.—My next view of him was a nearer and more distinct one—it was as a worshipper. My parents, who were Episcopalians, had a front pew in the gallery of Christ's Church, in Philadelphia; and from that favorable post of observation I noticed, in the middle aisle, a pew lined with crimson velvet fringed with gold, into which I saw a highly dignified gentleman enter, accompanied by two others, younger than himself, and most respectful in their deportment towards him. These as I have since learned,

were members of his military family. I was but a young boy, and the impression, as I well remember, on my youthful mind was, that I had never seen so grand a gentleman before. Every body else seemed to be of the same mind; for I do not consider it a slander on the very respectable congregation worshipping in that church, to say that far more looks were fixed upon that pew than on the pulpit (unless, indeed, it happened to be occupied by that most excellent and venerable of prelates, Bishop White). The deportment of Washington was reverent and attentive; his eyes, when not on the prayer-book, were on the officiating clergyman, and no witless or irreverent worshipper could plead Washington's example. I have since been in the church at Alexandria, in Virginia, which was his parish church—have handled the prayer-book he used, and seen his well known autograph in front of his Bible; and here the same impression existed as to his regular and exemplary attendance and demeanor. He could not always be present in the church at Philadelphia, in the afternoon, being pressed by the exigency of public affairs, which, in the mind of Washington, were ever held to be matters of necessity. Hence he gave orders, that in case certain important despatches were received during his attendance in church, they should be brought to him there; and I have seen them delivered into his hands. He opened them immediately, and deliberately and attentively read them through; then laying them on the seat by his side, he

resumed his prayer-book, and, apparently, gave his mind to the solemnities of the place and the hour.

"I once had an opportunity of beholding this greatest of men, under circumstances the best possible for exhibiting him to the fullest advantage. It was a privilege which could happen but once to any one; and I esteem the hour when I enjoyed it, as one of the brightest moments I was ever permitted to know. Its remembrance yet glows vividly on my mind: years have not dimmed it: the whole scene is yet before me, and I need not say with what force repeated public occasions of a like kind have since recalled it to remembrance. Yes, it was my favored lot to see and hear President Washington address the Congress of the United States when elected for the last time.—Of men now living, how few can say the same.

"I was but a schoolboy at the time, and had followed one of the many groups of people who, from all quarters, were making their way to the Hall in Chestnut street at the corner of Fifth, where the two Houses of Congress then held their sittings, and where they were that day to be addressed by the President, on the opening of his second term of office. Boys can often manage to work their way through a crowd better than men can; at all events, it so happened that I succeeded in reaching the steps of the Hall, from which elevation, looking in every direction, I could see nothing but human heads: a vast fluctuating sea, swaying to and fro, and filling every accessible place which commanded

even a distant view of the building. They had congregated, not with the hope of getting into the Hall, for that was physically impossible, but that they might see Washington. Many an anxious look was cast in the direction from which he was expected to come, till at length, true to the appointed hour (he was the most punctual of men), an agitation was observable on the outskirts of the crowd, which gradually opened and gave space for the approach of an elegant white coach, drawn by six superb white horses, having on its four sides, beautiful designs of the four seasons, painted by Cipriani. It slowly made its way, till it drew up immediately in front of the Hall. The rush was now tremendous. But as the coach-door opened, there issued from it two gentlemen with long white wands, who, with some difficulty, parted the people so as to open a passage from the carriage to the steps on which the fortunate schoolboy had achieved a footing, and whence the whole proceeding could be distinctly seen. As the person of the President emerged from the carriage, a universal shout rent the air, and continued, as he very deliberately ascended the steps. On reaching the platform, he paused, looking back on the carriage, thus affording to the anxiety of the people the indulgence they desired, of feasting their eyes upon his person. Never did a more majestic personage present himself to the public gaze. He was within two feet of me: I could have touched his clothes: but I should as soon have thought of touching an electric battery. Boy as

I was, I felt as in the presence of a divinity. As he turned to enter the Hall, the gentlemen with the white wands preceded him, and with still greater difficulty than before, repressed the people, and cleared a way to the great staircase. As he ascended I ascended with him, step by step, creeping close to the wall, and almost hidden by the skirts of his coat. Nobody looked at me: every body was looking at him; and thus I was permitted, unnoticed, to glide along, and happily to make my way (where so many were vainly longing, and struggling to enter) into the lobby of the chamber of the House of Representatives. Once in, I was safe; for had I even been seen by the officers in attendance, it would have been impossible to get me out again. I saw near me a large pyramidal stove, which, fortunately, had but little fire in it, and on which I forthwith clambered, until I had attained a secure perch, from which every part of the Hall could be deliberately and distinctly surveyed. Depend upon it, I made use of my eyes.

"On either side of the broad aisle that was left vacant in the centre, were assembled the two Houses of Congress. As the President entered, all rose, and remained standing till he had ascended the steps at the upper end of the chamber, and taken his seat in the Speaker's chair. It was an impressive moment. Notwithstanding that the spacious apartment, floor, lobby, galleries and all approaches, were crowded to their utmost capacity, not a sound was heard; the silence of

expectation was unbroken and profound; every breath seemed suspended. He was dressed in a full suit of the richest black velvet; his lower limbs in short-clothes with diamond knee-buckles, and black silk stockings. His shoes, which were brightly japanned, were surmounted with large square silver buckles. His hair, carefully displayed in the manner of the day, was fully powdered, and gathered behind into a black silk bag, on which was a bow of black ribbon. In his hand he carried a plain cocked hat, decorated with the American cockade. He wore by his side a light, slender dress sword, in a dark shagreen scabbard, with a richly ornamented hilt. His gait was deliberate, his manner solemn but self-possessed, and he presented, altogether, the most august human figure I had then, or have since beheld.

"Having retained his seat for a few moments, while the members resumed their seats, the President rose, and taking from his breast a roll of manuscript, proceeded to read his address. His voice was full and sonorous, deep and rich in its tones, free from that trumpet ring which it could assume amid the tumult of battle (and which is said to have been distinctly heard above all its roar), but sufficiently loud and clear to fill the chamber, and be heard, with perfect ease, in its most remote recesses. The address was of considerable length; its topics, of course, I forget, for I was too young to understand them; I only remember, in its latter part, some reference to the Wabash River (then a new

name to my ear), and to claims or disputes on the part of the Indian tribes. He read, as he did every thing else, with a singular sincerity and composure, with manly ease and dignity, but without the smallest attempt at display.

"Having concluded, he laid the manuscript upon the table before him, and resumed his seat; when, after a slight pause he rose and withdrew, the members rising and remaining on their feet until he left the chamber.

"The paper was then taken up by Mr. Beckley, the clerk of the House, and again read from beginning to end. Beckley's enunciation, by the by, was admirably clear, giving every syllable of every word, and, I may say, he was almost the only officer whose official duty it is to read, whom I ever heard read well.

"This form having been gone through, the members of the Senate retired, and I took advantage of the bustle to descend from my unwonted and presumptuous elevation, and mingle with the dissolving crowd."

So great was the general reverence expressed for Washington, that a little boy walking with his father in the streets of Philadelphia, and meeting the general, exclaimed—"Why, father! General Washington is only a man, after all!" Washington looked at him thoughtfully, and said—"That's all, my little fellow, that's all!"

Mr. Matthew Carey, well known as an enterprising

publisher in Philadelphia, had occasion once, during Washington's presidency, to call on him with reference to the printing of public documents, or some other matter connected with the press. He was received with great politeness, and his business affairs easily concluded; but he observed on coming out of the room where he had been speaking with the President, that streams of perspiration were coursing down his face, quite irrespective of the temperature of the day, and only indicative of the awe which Washington had been able to inspire in the mind of one not unaccustomed to contact with great men.

Gouverneur Morris once accepted a bet that he would approach Washington familiarly, and clap him on the shoulder. He did it, and won his bet; but the look with which Washington reproved the impertinence was quite enough to make him sorry for it.

"When Washington had his quarters near Newburgh, he was frequently occupied in writing those immortal letters to Congress, in which it is hard to say whether the patriot, the general, the statesman, or the father of the American army, shines the most illustriously, and which, of themselves, would be enough to confer immortality upon their author; and he gave a general order that at such times he was not to be disturbed or spoken to, unless under the most urgent necessity. A militia officer, of no particular rank or standing, came, one day, into the ante-room, and asked to see the commander-in-chief. Colonel Trumbull, the

aide-de-camp who was on duty, informed him that the general was not to be seen; but politely requested the officer to intrust with him his business. The officer (never having seen Washington) little knowing with whom he had to deal, and very proud of the opportunity of having a personal interview, treated this intimation with hauteur, and demanded to see General Washington himself, with whom, he said, he had important business. Colonel Trumbull stated the positive orders that had been given, and said that if he went to the general's private room the consequences must be upon the officer alone. "Oh, certainly," said he, smiling, "I'll bear all the consequences." The aid slowly and reluctantly approached the chamber, and gently knocked. "Who's there?" answered a deep voice within, in those tones which none heard without dread. Colonel Trumbull stated the case, and said that though repeatedly warned of the orders, the officer insisted on seeing him. "Does he?" and at the same time the warlike tread was heard, the door suddenly opened, and Washington came forth. "I thought," said Trumbull, when relating to me the anecdote, "I thought he would have walked over him." "Well, sir, what is your business with me?" The officer, with widely altered tone and manner, stammered out some petty question relating to the etiquette of camp duty, in which he had differed with a fellow officer, and which he wished to have decided by the commander-in-chief. Washington had never taken his eyes off of him; and

when he was done, replied, "Ask that question of your orderly sergeant," and turned into his chamber. Trumbull said he never in his life saw a human creature so completely thunderstruck. He never appeared again at head-quarters.

Yet, it must not be understood from these instances, that there was the least want of courtesy in his general manner; the reverse is true: he was truly and uniformly polite; but it was a grave politeness, infinitely removed from that heartless artificial polish which is acquired by frivolous minds, from long converse with the world. There was a simplicity, and even a severe dignity about it, which was inherent in the man, and which never left him. In the cases I have mentioned, he was rudely trespassed on; and no man could trifle with Washington."

Formality was certainly the order of those days. A gentleman now living in Philadelphia says that when he used to be playing with young Custis till dinner time, he was sometimes invited by the boy to go home with him to dinner. He was very kindly received, Mrs. Washington asking after his mamma, and the general patting him on the head, with a few pleasant words. But when they came to sit down to dinner the stiffness was awful; the secretaries offering dishes to the President—"Will your Excellency have a potato?" etc., and hardly another word spoken.

This must have been in very perplexing and sober times; for Washington at Mount Vernon was, as we

have seen, no such terrific person. Many such little incidents as this are remembered of him:—

At Mamaroneck reconnoitring with his aids one morning early, he was passing a house in the door-yard of which a boy was trying very hard to split a large log, but not making much progress. Washington observing the process, stopped and said to the boy: "Put your wedge in at the other end, and you can do it." The boy complied, and the log gave way. "There," said the general, "remember that General Washington taught you how to split wood." The "boy" is still living to remember the lesson.

When Gilbert Stuart first painted Washington in 1796, the chief used to take the beautiful Harriet Chew, afterwards Mrs. Charles Carroll, with him, saying that "her conversation *ought to* give his face its most agreeable expression."

Mr. Noah Webster, author of the Dictionary, once dined or took breakfast with him, and related that upon Washington's offering him a choice of molasses or sugar with something on the table, he replied, jokingly, that he would take sugar, for Yankees ate "plenty of molasses at home." Upon this Washington burst into a hearty laugh, saying interrogatively, "There is no truth, I am sure, in the story of your eating molasses with pork?"

A good many scintillations of mirthfulness break out in Washington's letters of friendship; and here is

a story which, coming pretty well authenticated, must be accepted as a proof that he enjoyed a joke :—

"Two gentlemen set out together to pay a solemn state visit at Mount Vernon. They had a good way to go, and as they did not wish to appear before their host and hostess travel-worn and dusty, but rather in a state of distinguished elegance, they took with them in a portmanteau the apparatus and appurtenances of a luxurious toilette. They passed the night at a tavern on the road, where they enjoyed the company of a pedlar. The next day they shouldered their budget and jogged on again, until they reached a charming shady lonely wood near the place of their destination, when, agreeing that this was exactly the spot which they wanted for their tiring-room, they removed part of their clothing, and opened their pack for their bands, frills, silk stockings, and knee-buckles, when out of it tumbled a quantity of brass thimbles, tape, and sugar-plums, as if Signor Blitz had carried it for them. In a word, they had unwittingly changed bags with the pedlar. Washington happened to be walking in his grounds not far off. Their shouts of laughter brought him to the scene of their discomfiture; and when he perceived their plight and the reason of it, he was thrown into such an ecstasy of amusement that he actually rolled on the ground."

Washington was always disposed to encourage innocent amusements, and evidently considered occasions of complete unbending as among the necessaries of life,

even to himself. There were, it is true, long seasons of such stern, ceaseless devotion to duty, that he mentions, even to the President of Congress, being obliged to take the hours that should be devoted to sleep for business writing. But he could not but notice that these seasons were apt to be followed, in his own case, with severe illness, and we have no reason to think that he wilfully pursued even duty beyond the point of health and cheerful spirits. The French officers whom he received so kindly to his house and table, had a great deal to say about his manners at home, and they always represented him very kind and genial. The Marquis de Chastellux speaks of his loving to sit over the nuts and apples for hours in the evening, conversing and giving "sentiments"—an old-fashioned kind of toast.

Chastellux's descriptions are enthusiastic and very graphic. He was particularly enchanted with Washington's bold and elegant riding. He says the general used to break his own horses, a business which he understood perfectly. The State of Virginia sent him a present of two horses which he delighted to ride. The Marquis once saw him, when caught in a shower of rain, put his horse to the gallop and leap high fences to regain his quarters, which he did in splendid style, "sans se guindre sur les étriers," to the gay Frenchman's great delight.

Chastellux says, "The goodness and kindness which characterize him are felt by all about him · but the

confidence which he inspires is never familiar, because it is in every case founded on the same basis—a profound esteem for his virtues and a great opinion of his talents."

"Washington," says M. Guizot, "loved Lafayette with a paternal tenderness, of which his life bears no other example. * * * That accomplished and chivalrous young nobleman, who left the court of Versailles to bear his sword and his fortune to the planters of America, singularly pleased the grave general of the Republican army. He viewed that event as a tribute paid by the nobility of the Old World to the cause and to him—he regarded it as a link between himself and the brilliant, the witty, the celebrated society of France. In the modesty of his greatness he was at once flattered and touched by M. de Lafayette's arrival, and his thoughts were wont to dwell with emotions of peculiar fondness upon his youthful friend, so unlike any other friend of his whole life, and one who had left all to serve beside him."

A London paper of 1784 mentions with a sort of enthusiasm the disinterestedness of Washington:—

"There are few," says the writer, "so blinded by prejudice as to deny such a degree of merit in the American general, as to place him in a very distinguished point of view; but even those who have been accustomed to view him as the most illustrious character of this or any other age, will be astonished at the following instance of his integrity. When General

Washington accepted the command of the American army, he rejected all pecuniary reward or pay whatever, and only stipulated for the reimbursement of such sums as he might expend in the public service. Accordingly, at the conclusion of the war, he gave in to Congress the whole of his seven years' expenditure, which only amounted to £16,000 Pennsylvania currency, or £10,000 sterling. In the eyes of our modern British generals, the above circumstances will prove totally incredible, or, at least, they will deem Mr. Washington little better than a fool; for, if we judge from certain accounts, £10,000 would scarcely have answered the demands of a commander-in-chief at New York *a single month.*"

But to record all the praises of Washington would be a hopeless task. Friends and enemies concur in representing him—the former in their enthusiasm, the latter in their forced admissions, as the greatest and best of men.

So just, so wise, so beneficial, so far above the tone of vulgar heroes, was the Father of our Country, that but a small proportion of what is interesting about him can be given in any book. His praise is every where; he has no competitors, he stands alone. We Americans should strive to know him, and we cannot be grateful enough to the kind Providence that guarded our national infancy, for providing a father whom we need not fear to search out, and whom in all things we may be proud to imitate.

A true warrior, yet no Napoleon, he bore the sword with hands unsoiled, wielded it for peace and not for conquest, laid it down more gladly than he took it up, and used it to make friends even of his enemies.

History, which shows us many a more dazzling character, shows none so grandly consistent, so splendid in disinterestedness, so free from conceit, yet so determined in duty, so true and tender in friendship, yet able to put aside every personal consideration when the good of the country and the great cause of Freedom were in question. What manner of people ought we to be in return for this great gift? Let us bless God that America, having produced one such son, may bring forth others like him, when the day of trial shall come, as it may come, even to us, favored as we are above all the nations of the earth. There is more hope, not less, of another Washington, from having had the first.

We say of a great genius, like Shakspeare or Raphael, that he is inimitable. But Washington was not a genius in the ordinary acceptation of that term. His perfections, the growth of nature, circumstances and God's aid and favor combined, are imitable; on an humbler scale.

Resolute integrity, indefatigable industry, the power of deferring self to duty, a feeling of true brotherhood towards mankind, and a sincere and habitual desire to co-operate with God in doing good to the world, may

make many a Washington that the world will never hear of; not in man's judgment, perhaps, but to the All-seeing eye, and to the conscious heart of him who is able to devote himself, as Washington did, soul and body, heart and life, to truth, service, and duty.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

MR. FIELD, a much respected gentleman and philosophical writer, who resided for many years on the Duke of Northumberland's property at Isleworth, Middlesex, not many miles from London, believed himself to be the possessor of an original portrait of Washington's mother, of which he gives the following history, in a letter to Judge Washington:—

"SIR,—Some time about the year 1787, when I was a boy, an uncle of mine pointed out to me a house at Cookham, in Berkshire—a pretty little country retreat—which he informed me was the last residence of the parents of General Washington in this country, from which they finally removed to America. At the same time he took me to a Mrs. Ann Morer, who had been in his employment—whose maiden name was (I believe) Taylor, and whose mother accompanied your relatives to North America, and was the nurse of your immortal ancestor. Such were some of the particulars she told me, and at the same time showed me, with a becoming pride, several relics—articles of dress and furniture—which had belonged to the Washingtons. And I well remember the high value in which she held a work-bag made from a dress of Mrs. W. But that which most particularly interested me was her portrait, painted in oil, in the manner of Kneller. I had been as a child an especial favorite of this woman, who had no children of her own, and she often promised to leave me this portrait when she died.

"It happened many years after, that being in the neighborhood of Cookham, I was induced to pay Mrs. Morer a visit, when she again showed me her treasures, and informed me two American gentlemen had found her out by desire of General Washington, and had presented her with some money.

"Finally, about the year 1812–13, Hannah Taylor, a niece of Mrs. M., then servant in my family (at Lucas house, Binley, near Bagshot), informed us of her aunt's decease, and of the intended sale of her effects by auction.

I therefore forwarded a request to Hannah's mother to purchase the pictures for me, which was done accordingly."

Feeling some interest in this curious topic, and being in England in 1854, the present writer called upon Mr. Field, heard from his own lips a confirmation of the story, and saw the portrait, which bears a striking resemblance, in its leading traits, to those of the Washington family. Mr. Field, who died soon after, was a most amiable and entirely trustworthy person, enjoying the highest esteem from a large circle of distinguished friends. He was surrounded by works of art, and, being confined to the house by long ill-health, had made his pretty English cottage a little paradise of books and other objects of interest. The writer afterwards visited Cookham, saw the spot reputed in England as the birthplace of Washington, but could gather nothing further in the course of a morning's hasty observation.

No. II.

Mr. Weems gives the following story as from an "old lady of Fredericksburg:"—

"I dreamt," said the mother of Washington, "that I was sitting in the piazza of a large new house, into which we had but lately moved. George, at that time about five years old, was in the garden with his corn-stalk plough, busily running furrows in the sand, in imitation of Negro Dick, in whose ploughing George was so interested that it was sometimes difficult to get him to dinner.

"And so, as I was sitting in the piazza at my work, I suddenly heard in my dream a kind of roaring noise on the eastern side of the house. On running out to see what was the matter, I beheld a dreadful sheet of fire bursting from the roof. The sight struck me with a horror that took away my strength, and threw me almost senseless on the ground. My husband and the servants, as I saw in my dream, soon came up, but, like myself, were so terrified at the sight that they could make no attempt to extinguish the flames. In this most distressing state the image of my little son came, I thought, to my mind, more dear and tender than ever; and turning towards the garden where he was engaged with his corn-stalk plough, I screamed out twice, with all my might—George! George! In a moment, as I thought, he threw down his mimic plough, and ran to me, saying, 'High, ma! what makes you call so angry! aint I a good boy—don't I always run to you as soon as I hear you call?' I could make no reply, but just threw up my arms towards the flame. He looked up and

saw the house all on fire; but, instead of bursting out a crying, as might have been expected from a child, he instantly brightened up, and seemed ready to fly to extinguish it. But first looking at me with great tenderness, he said—'Oh, ma! don't be afraid; God will help us, and we shall soon put it out.' His looks and words revived our spirits in so wonderful a manner, that we all instantly set about to assist him. A ladder was presently brought, on which, as I saw in my dream, he ran up with the nimbleness of a squirrel, and the servants supplied him with water, which he threw on the fire from an American gourd. But that growing weaker, the flames appeared to gain ground, breaking forth and roaring most dreadfully, which so frightened the servants that many of them, like persons in despair, began to leave him. But he, still undaunted, continued to ply it with water, animating the servants at the same time, both by his words and actions. For a long time the contest appeared very doubtful; but at length a venerable old man, with a tall cap and an iron rod in his hand, like a lightning rod, reached out to him a curious little trough, like a wooden shoe! On receiving this, he redoubled his exertions, and soon extinguished the fire. Our joy on the occasion was unbounded. But he, on the contrary, showing no more of transport now than of terror before, looked rather sad at sight of the great harm that had been done. Then I saw in my dream that after some time spent in deep thought, he called out, with much joy, 'Well, ma! now if you and the family will but consent, we can make a far better roof than this ever was; a roof of such a quality, that if well kept together, it will last for ever; but if you take it apart, you will make the house ten thousand times worse than it was before.'

This, though certainly a very curious dream, needs no Daniel to interpret it; especially if we take Mrs. Washington's new house, for the young Colony Government—the fire on its east side, for North's civil war—the gourd which Washington first employed, for the American three and six months' enlistments—the old man with his cap and iron rod, for Doctor Franklin—the shoe-like vessel which he reached to Washington, for the Sabot or wooden-shoed nation, the French, whom Franklin courted a long time for America—and the new roof proposed by Washington, for a stanch, honest Republic—that "equal government," which, by guarding alike the welfare of all, ought by all to be so heartily beloved as to endure for ever."

No. III.

Lafayette was but eighteen years old when he happened to dine in company with the Duke of Gloucester, brother of King George III., and heard the contest between England and America discussed by the duke and his

friends, the character and conduct of "the rebels" being, of course, very severely treated. His interest was so strongly excited that he asked many questions of the duke, and felt himself, in spite of the most unfavorable representations, deeply interested in the idea of people's battling for their liberty under so many discouraging circumstances. Before he left the company, he had conceived the project of going in person to the aid of this struggling people. Returning to Paris, Lafayette procured an introduction to Silas Deane, then one of our commissioners for obtaining the alliance of France, and was by Mr. Deane's representations confirmed in his desire to take part in the patriotic struggle. The loss of Fort Washington and other unlucky accidents very much dampened the courage of the friends of the cause, but Lafayette was above such hasty conclusions. "My zeal and love of liberty," said he, "have perhaps hitherto been my prevailing motives; but now I see a chance for usefulness, which I had not anticipated. I have money; I will purchase a ship, which shall convey to America myself, my companions, and the freight for Congress."

While the vessel was getting ready, Lafayette visited England, in performance of a previous agreement with a friend, and was there treated with all the attention and courtesy due to his high rank and distinguished connections.

When he had been three weeks in London, he received private intelligence that his vessel was ready, and breaking away from all that was most interesting in England, he immediately set out for France.

So delicate was his sense of honor, that he declined an invitation from one of the royal dukes to visit the dock-yards at Portsmouth, where the naval armament was then being fitted for the American war, lest he should seem to have taken an undue advantage of his position.

He met with many difficulties and much opposition before he could even reach his vessel. A *lettre de cachet*, a terrible thing in those days, was sent after him, but he eluded it, and by stealth sailed for America, accompanied by the Baron de Kalb and eleven other officers of different ranks, seeking service in America. On the voyage, he employed himself, though sea-sick, with studying English, and also with reading works on military tactics. Lafayette desired the captain to sail directly for the United States, but this the gentleman was by no means disposed to do, urging the probability of their being taken by some British cruiser, and sent to Halifax as prisoners for nobody knew how long.

Lafayette stood out for his rights, as owner; the captain remained unyielding, until the young hero threatened to supersede him and put the second officer in his place. Upon which it came out that the captain had on board eight thousand dollars' worth of goods for sale on his own account,

which he was naturally very loth to see captured by the British. Upon this the marquis promised to make good any loss, although the goods had been smuggled on board his ship without his permission or knowledge.

By a good Providence they made land on the coast of South Carolina. "Here," says Mr. Sparks, from whose animated account our whole sketch is condensed, "here they debarked, and a distant light served to guide them. When they arrived near the house whence the light proceeded, the dogs growled and barked, and the people within supposed them to be a party of marauders from the enemy's vessels. Before gaining admittance, it was demanded of them who they were and what they wanted.

"Baron de Kalb was their interpreter, he having before been in America, and acquired some facility in speaking the English language.

"At length suspicions were removed, and the strangers were received with a cordial welcome and a generous hospitality. Lafayette retired to rest, rejoiced that he had at last attained the haven of his wishes, and was safely landed in America, beyond the reach of his pursuers.

"The morning was beautiful. The novelty of every thing around him, the room, the bed with mosquito curtains, the black servants who came to ascertain his wants, the beauty and strange appearance of the country, as he saw it from his window, clothed in luxuriant verdure, all conspired to produce a magical effect, and to impress him with indescribable sensations. He found himself in the house of Major Huger, a gentleman not more remarkable for his hospitality than for his worth and highly respectable character. Major Huger provided horses to convey him and his companions to Charleston. The vessel likewise went into Charleston harbor."

In one of Lafayette's letters to his wife,—for this boy of nineteen had a wife and two children—he writes:—

"As to my own reception, it has been most agreeable in every quarter, and to have come with me secures the most flattering welcome. I have just passed five hours at a grand dinner, given in honor of me by an individual of this city. Generals Howe and Moultrie, and several officers of my suite, were present. We drank healths and tried to talk English. I begin to speak it a little. To-morrow I shall go with these gentlemen and call on the Governor of the State, and make arrangements for my departure. The next day the commanding officers here will show me the city and its environs, and then I shall set out for the army.

"Considering the pleasant life I lead in this country, my sympathy with the people, which makes me feel as much at ease in their society as if I had known them for twenty years; the similarity between their mode of thinking and my own, and my love of liberty and of glory, one might suppose that I am very happy. But you are not with me; my friends are not with me; and there is no happiness for me far from you and them."

At Philadelphia Lafayette presented himself at the door of Congress, but received a very discouraging answer to his first application. He was told there were so many French gentlemen applying for situations in the army that his chance was very slender. Who can wonder that the stripling should not at first sight have inspired any body with much respect for his efficiency as a soldier?

But the aspect of things changed materially when he made an application in writing to be allowed to act as a volunteer, *without pay*.

Here he put himself, at once, in one particular, on a level with the commander-in-chief, whose refusal of all pecuniary compensation had given him throughout such an immeasurable advantage.

The result was that Lafayette received the commission of a major-general in the army of the United States, when he was not quite twenty years of age.

Washington, in the very first instance, invited him to make head-quarters his home, adding, in a tone of pleasantry, "that he could not promise him the luxuries of a court, or even the conveniences which his former habits might have rendered essential to his comfort, but, since he had become an American soldier, he would doubtless contrive to accommodate himself to the character he had assumed, and submit with a good grace to the customs, manners, and privations of a republican army." If Lafayette was made happy by his success with Congress, his joy was redoubled by this flattering proof of friendship and regard on the part of the commander-in-chief.

"His horses and equipage were immediately sent to camp, and ever afterwards, even when he had the command of a division, he kept up his intimacy at head-quarters, and enjoyed all the advantages of a member of the general's family."

From this time the commander-in-chief felt that he had a friend, and the warmth of his expression towards the marquis is hardly excelled by even the vivacious tenderness of the young enthusiast for himself. Washington's letters to his friends are warm and friendly, as well as candid and confiding, but to Lafayette he always, after they became well acquainted, writes in a tone of affection which bears testimony to the worth of both—the man of forty-six and the youth of twenty.

Washington had a universal interest in rising young men, no matter of what country or party. All his experience of the unworthiness of men of riper age—and it must have been sadly extensive—never chilled his hopeful feelings toward the young. This shows itself every where, throughout his life and letters. The importance of those forming influences by which the bent of a whole life is often decided, was habitually dwelt upon by him

in his intercourse with the young; and when he saw a young man entering upon his career with clear, open brow and vigorous step, he loved him, and was always rejoiced to advance and favor him. Lafayette and Hamilton were boys in age when Washington trusted the most important secrets and the weightiest affairs to their ability and zeal if not to their judgment. He had older advisers, but he made chosen friends and daily companions of the gallant young fellows who had thrown themselves into a well-nigh desperate cause with such generous ardor.

This is of so frequent occurrence as to be considered a characteristic trait; and it is enough, even unsupported by a thousand other things, to disprove the opinion only too prevalent, that Washington was cold, unsympathizing, if not morose. His affections were often overruled, or even crushed, by prudence or disappointment, but they were naturally warm and tender, especially toward the young.

Lafayette was not the only very youthful friend whose aid and support were very precious to Washington during the darkest period of the Revolution. In 1777, the extraordinary ability and merit of Alexander Hamilton, then not twenty years old, induced Washington to invite him to become a member of his military family, and he was accordingly appointed his aide-de-camp, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. This was the period of Washington's greatest popularity, as well as one of extreme difficulty in affairs, and it brought around him in cordial union a great number of leading spirits. Danger and privation, with only enough of success to prevent absolute despondency, had united, heart and hand, this gallant company. The common cause absorbed all petty interests; private distresses and losses were not thought of, in comparison with the great boon which then began to seem within their reach. Greene, Sullivan, Knox, Cadwallader, were grouped about the commander-in-chief, so that we hardly think of them separately at this time.

Robert H. Harrison, of Maryland, known at the time as the "Old Secretary," had stood first among the aids, a man of talent, discretion, and probity, with that frank and generous temper which Washington loved. Tilghman and Meade, younger men, shared the wearing duties of the household; but when young Hamilton, then twenty years of age, accepted a similar post, he soon attained, by simple right of ability and merit, the position of principal and confidential aid. His personal qualities may be guessed by the fact, reported by Mrs. Hamilton, that Washington used to call him "my boy," while the public called him "the little lion."

It speaks well for all these gallant young men that for five years they lived together, intrusted with the most various as well as difficult and exhausting duties, yet maintaining perfect harmony and friendship among

themselves. The pen of Hamilton was most in demand, and there were times when his acuteness, his fearless spirit, and his graceful as well as forcible style, were of the highest service. In the negotiation rendered necessary by the unlucky capture of General Lee, "the pen for our army," says a contemporary, "was held by Hamilton, and for dignity of manner, pith of matter, and elegance of style, General Washington's letters are unrivalled in military annals."

So immense was the press of business at this time, that, with his four able aids hard at work, Washington applied to Congress for more assistance, saying that many valuable documents were in danger of being lost for want of proper copying and registering.

It was by means of the application of the aids and his own inexhaustible care and forethought, that the history of the campaigns of the Revolution is so minute and complete. Washington felt that the time would come when the picture of those troublous days, and some particular knowledge of the men who acted and suffered in them, would be infinitely precious to those who were to profit by them. If he had attempted, like Cæsar, to describe his own wars for the benefit of posterity, he would if possible have omitted his own personal share in them; yet he set a noble value on fame, and, above all, desired that all he had done should be open to examination and scrutiny, so that both friends and enemies might be fully satisfied. His avoidance, whether systematic or instinctive, of all reference to his own merit in success is remarkable. Even in his private letters, the general account is almost impersonal, unless some particular officer is mentioned with praise, while his own share is usually unmentioned.

In a letter from Colonel Hamilton to General Schuyler, dated February 18th, 1781, we find the following:—

"My Dear Sir,— * * * An unexpected change has taken place in my situation. I am no longer a member of the general's family. This information will surprise you, and the manner of it will surprise you more. Two days ago the general and I passed each other upon the stairs; he told me he wanted to speak to me—I told him I would wait upon him immediately. I went below and delivered Mr. Tilghman a letter to be sent to the commissary, containing an order of a pressing and interesting nature.

"Returning to the general, I was stopped on the way by the Marquis de Lafayette, and we conversed together about a minute on a matter of business. He can testify how impatient I was to get back, and that I left him in a manner which, but for our intimacy, would have been more than abrupt.

"Instead of finding the general, as is usual, in his room, I met him at the head of the stairs, when, accosting me in an angry tone, 'Colonel Hamilton,' said he, 'you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes; I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect.' I replied, without petulancy, 'I am not conscious of it, sir, but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part.' 'Very well, sir,' said he, 'if it be your choice,' or something to that effect, and we separated. I sincerely believe my absence, which gave so much umbrage, did not last two minutes.

"In less than an hour after, Tilghman came to me, in the general's name, assuring me of his great confidence in my abilities, integrity, usefulness, etc., and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion."

This, however, Colonel Hamilton refused. He had always disliked the office of an aide-de-camp, and had declined serving in that capacity until tempted by the high estimate he had formed of the character of Washington. He proceeds to say, "It has been often with great difficulty I have prevailed on myself not to renounce it; but while, from motives of public utility, I was doing violence to my feelings, I was always determined, if ever there was a breach between us, never to consent to an accommodation."

In attempting to give a true idea of Washington's character, so striking an instance as this could not fairly be omitted. Washington, devoted body and soul to the public interest, harassed by a pressure of affairs too great for mortal ability, had a few noble and faithful spirits about him, on whom his soul rested, amid all trials and discouragements, with all that trust and confidence which only noble souls can feel. With one of these dear friends, a highly gifted one, but scarcely even yet more than a boy in years, he is vexed, justly or unjustly, it matters not; he is vexed, and he speaks to him hastily and unbecomingly. The youthful aid, high-toned, and self-reliant by nature, and conscious of past services beyond his years, replies in a manner far from conciliatory, and withdraws, leaving his general, a man double his age, standing where he had been waiting the return of his aid, whom he needed for urgent business. But very soon, "in less than an hour," we are told, the elder man sends a virtual apology to the young man, desiring a conversation which shall end in a reconciliation.

Without commenting upon Hamilton's mode of meeting this request, which does not seem to have appeared to Washington unbecoming, although it declined his offer of a complete restoration of personal intimacy, we

cannot but think, that Washington, though in fault in the first instance, appears in a peculiarly noble attitude in the last.

His sense of justice was so ready, and his power over himself so uniform, that there is no doubt he felt humbled by the recollection of his hasty words and imperious manner towards one who had served him so long and so well. So many men might have felt, but few perhaps would have confessed the feeling to one who had responded so haughtily, and continued to decline a restoration to intimacy.

The impetuous young secretary sincerely believes his absence "did not last two minutes." No doubt he did, yet with our knowledge of Washington's habitual accuracy, we may venture to suppose the latter nearer right than the former, and every one knows how irritating it is to the meekest temper to be kept waiting, apparently, without necessity. Besides we have reason to suppose the general tone of Hamilton to have been one rather trying to a man so much his senior in years and his superior in military rank.

A man of different stamp might be suspected of seeking a reconciliation from motives of policy, as the able secretary could so ill be spared; but Washington's whole life and character would stamp with absurdity such an imputation. General Lafayette says he found each disposed to believe the other was not sorry for the separation. It is pleasant to know that these two great men, with all the difference in their age, in their turns of mind and traits of character, continued friends, with undiminished esteem for each other.

Washington still asked Hamilton's counsel, which was never refused, and in after years they were again associated, with all their original intimacy, and more than the original respect.

This incident calls to mind and with more claim to belief than is usually due to flying traditions, the story that a lawyer, named Payne, once knocked young George Washington down, in a public court-room; and that after retiring with his friends to the tavern for the purpose of arranging a "a hostile meeting"—in common parlance, a duel—Washington, on reflection, went to his assailant, saying—"Mr. Payne, I was wrong yesterday, let me be right to-day," and offered his hand, which was cordially accepted.

As this affair is said to have taken place after Washington had amply proved his courage, it may not have cost him any great sacrifice of feeling to apologize; but from what we know of his character in after life, we could imagine him capable of apologizing in any case whatsoever, if he were once convinced he had been in the wrong.

An eminently just person he certainly was. Even in his dealings with

his servants we see a constant reference, not to his power, but to his sense of right.

He settles all disputed points on general grounds of right, and gives his reasons whenever he is obliged to insist upon any thing with an inferior. Hard to please he may well have been, for the sense of justice and honesty which regulated so scrupulously his own dealings, made him sensitive to the obligations and the carelessness of others; and the patience with which he persisted in working out the performance of his own obligations, was equally obvious in the pertinacity with which he insisted on his right from other people. Many of his letters under these circumstances are labored arguments, though written generally in conversational style, and enlivened by touches of caustic humor, though always carefully guarded against an overbearing tone, and frequently avowing a consciousness of fallibility of judgment.

He says, in regard to some failure in an overseer—"This was my intention, but either I did not express myself clearly, or the directions were not attended to.

"I now hope they will be understood and attended to both." "There is one thing I cannot forbear to add, and in strong terms: it is that whenever I order a thing to be done, it must be done, or a reason given *at the time*, or as soon as the impracticability is discovered, why it cannot, which will produce a countermand or change. But it is not for the person receiving the order to suspend or dispense with its execution, and, after it has been supposed to have gone into effect, for me to be told that nothing has been done in it; that it will be done, or could not be done. Either of these is unpleasant and disagreeable to me, having been accustomed all my life to more regularity and punctuality, and knowing that nothing is required but system and method to accomplish all reasonable requests."

A man of this stamp may be strict, but he cannot be called severe. It is true, slack and inefficient people are apt to dislike such a master, because exactness is odious to their disposition and habits. But the laws of nature may as well be quarrelled with, because they do not vacillate for the accommodation of the unready. This unchangeable adherence to principle, however distressingly it may operate in particular cases, is most merciful and beneficial on the whole. In the case of Captain Asgill, selected to die in retaliation for the murder of Captain Huddy by the British, the distress of Washington is apparent in all he says and does, but he never thought of yielding; because as he writes, "Justice to the army and the public, my own honor, and, I think I may venture to say, *universal benevolence*, require the resolution to be carried into full execution."

It has been said, and attempted to be proved, that the merit of Wash-

ington's letters is largely due to the literary skill of his aids, particularly of Hamilton; but this is amply disproved by a perusal of the whole correspondence, extending over so many years, in which there is a remarkable uniformity not only of thought but of style. Making all deductions for a certain stiffness, and occasional error in construction, Washington's letters are models in their way, and as a whole, among the most remarkable of his performances.

We must, however, in all candor, tell our young readers that he was all the earlier part of his life a careless speller. We say a careless speller, because he would often spell the same word right and wrong alternately. Even the proper names of his own family and friends are spelled differently at different times. It would seem that he was so intent upon the thing he was writing about, be it what it might, that he thought little or nothing about the spelling.

Now we cannot praise our hero for this, even allowing that it was occasioned by his earnestness about more important matters Bad spelling is a bad thing, and generally shows want of observation and habits of inaccuracy. But we may point to Washington's habitual accuracy in every other particular, as a shining example, and as a reason for tracing these trifling errors in spelling to some other cause.

In the first place let us observe, that in his time, and in this new and busy country, little attention had yet been paid to literature; while if the cities even had made some advance in that direction, the country, and particularly that part of it where Washington lived, was too full of Indian wars and other stirring business in which it fell to his lot to take a prominent part, to permit him to give his attention to nicety in points unessential. That he was not alone among brother planters in carelessness on this point, may be seen from the following curious specimen of orthography, found among his papers. It is the certificate verbatim of somebody to a departing overseer:—"This is to certifie that Henry McCoy has served me in the Compacity as an Overseer for this last two years which he had the Management of Ten Hand the first year and I think him very Caperbel of he is a very Industrious obligen Man Given under my hand this 27 of November 1792.

"R— B.——"

But it must further be observed, that some instances of what seems to us now like bad spelling, are in reality only old-fashioned spelling. Many changes have gradually been adopted, and in Horace Walpole, and many other English writers of Washington's day, we find decided departures from the mode now in vogue. In a book published in Tonson in 1735, which

we happen to see at this moment, we find capitals used ad libitum, as thus: —"I remember a Saying of King Charles II., on Sir Matthew Hales, (who was doubtless an Uncorrupt and Upright Man), that his Servants were sure to be cast in a Tryal." And in the same book Satire is spelt Satyr, and gewgaw, gugaw—easy, easie; dye, dy'd, for die and died. Another book published by Miller and Rivington in 1748, has "All the great genius's for geniuses; Chanels for channels; Lye for lie; falsly for falsely."

It is only Washington's early and constant painstaking in whatever he pretended to do, that makes it at all worth while to apologize for his spelling. His school exercises were so carefully written, and his letters when a young man bore so many marks of solicitous attention to style, that we are naturally a little surprised to find, further on, some appearance of slight in minute points.

But there was probably no time during the last century, when it was the fashion among hard-riding Virginia planters to care much about the non-essentials of correspondence. To write truth, good sense and patriotism, in fair, business language, was evidently considered of the highest importance. Not words but things occupied the minds of men prominent on the stage. Comparatively few of Washington's contemporaries, on this side of the water, had received a university education; and the gentlemen planters had, in general, picked up all they knew of letters at country schools of no great pretensions. That this was Washington's own case we have seen; and whatever may have been Mr. Williams's pedagogical reputation at Pope's Creek and thereabouts, it may well be doubted whether he would now take a high rank among his brethren of the ferule.

After all, the words which strike our nineteenth century eyes as incorrectly spelled in the Washington MSS. are but few; and if we should pick out from among them all those the spelling of which has changed since that time, the amount of those which show carelessness or ignorance, is, in reality, very small.

On the other hand, what unwearied patience, what minuteness, what ease, what natural elegance, do we find in the vast body of letters which his industry has left us. Not alone in the grand, massive public epistles, which are every where marked with the essential elements of his character—those high qualities which made him what he was, to us and to the world—but in the most ordinary private note of business, an order for goods, an account of the shipping of tobacco; a word of caution to a careless manager, or of reproof to a delinquent debtor;—in all and every specimen we see the unconscious superiority of the man, in words which evidently flowed from his pen, as the readiest and simplest expression of his earnest thoughts.

It is true no single letter is a wonderful performance; we would not be understood as claiming that kind of eminence for Washington. Many men have written superior letters; but no man, it may safely be said, so many good ones, on such a multiplicity of subjects.

To know any thing of their power and might we must read the eleven large volumes selected from them by Mr. Sparks. The manuscript letters extend to eighty volumes.

THE END.